

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

黒鷲死体宅配便

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STAFF A



Psychic

[エンバミング]: 死体修復

STAFF B



Dowsing

[チャネリング]: 宇宙人と交信

STAFF C



Hacking

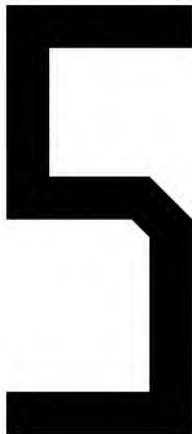
[マペット]: 宇宙人が憑依

YOUR BODY IS THEIR BUSINESS!



黒鷲死体宅配便

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service



story
EIJI OTSUKA

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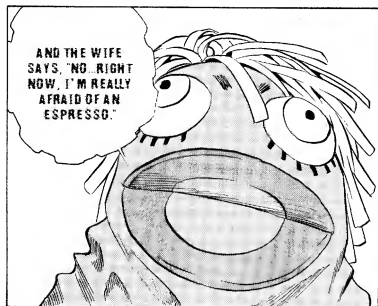
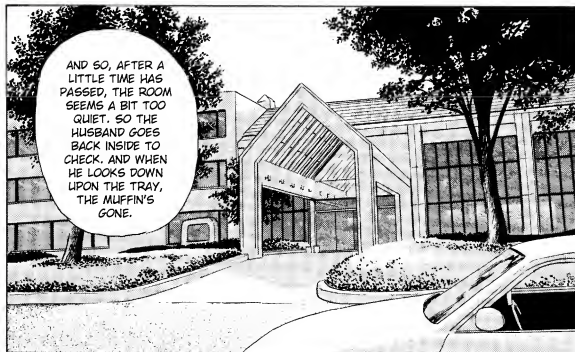
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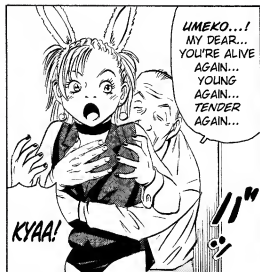
lettering and touch-up
IHL



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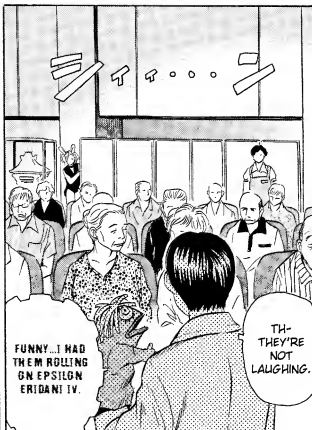


UMEKO...!
MY DEAR...
YOU'RE ALIVE
AGAIN...
YOUNG
AGAIN...
TENDER
AGAIN...

KYAA!



HEY!
I'M NOT
UMEKO!



FUNNY...I HAD
THEM ROLLING
ON EPSILON
ERIDANI IV.

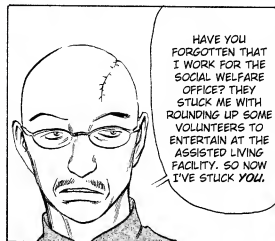
TH-
THEY'RE
NOT
LAUGHING.



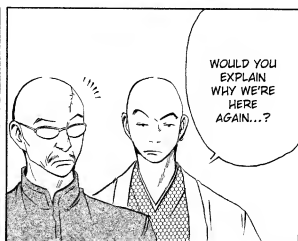
GET HIM
OFF OF
ME!

UMEKO...
LET ME
FEEL
YOU...
GROPE
YOU...

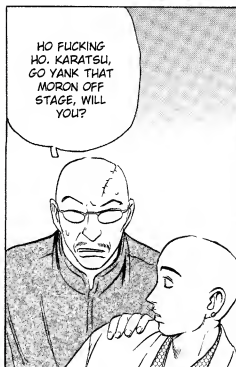
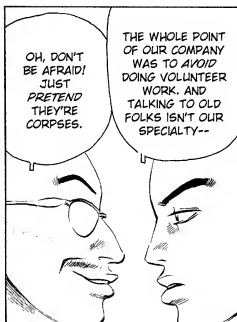
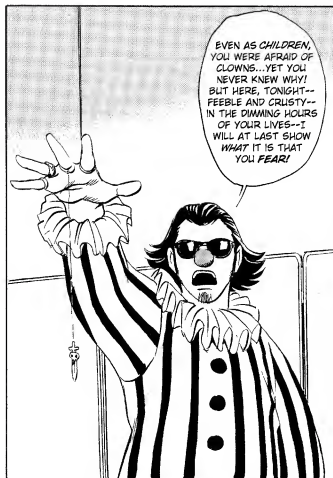
HEH-HEH-HEH!
YOU AIN'T
NEVER TOO OLD
T' GET YOUR-
SELF A LITTLE
O' THAT MOE!

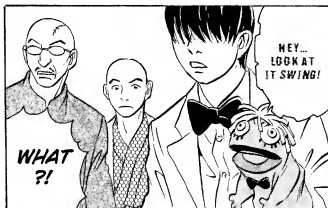
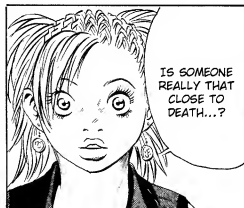
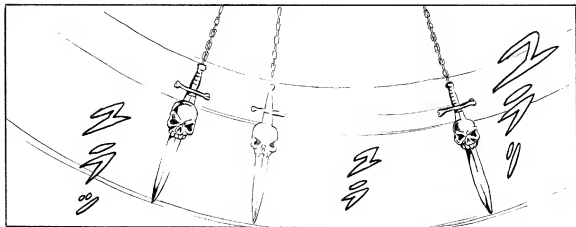


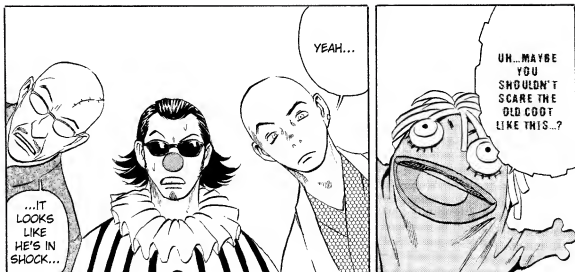
HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN THAT
I WORK FOR THE
SOCIAL WELFARE
OFFICE? THEY
STUCK ME WITH
ROUNDING UP SOME
VOLUNTEERS TO
ENTERTAIN AT THE
ASSISTED LIVING
FACILITY. SO NOW
I'VE STUCK YOU.



WOULD YOU
EXPLAIN
WHY WE'RE
HERE
AGAIN...?



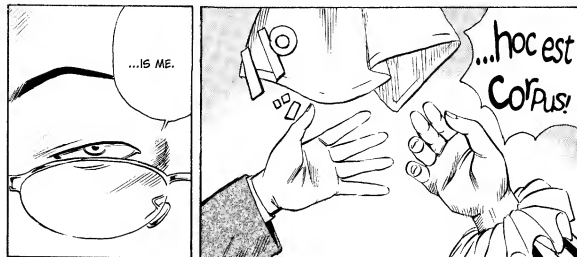
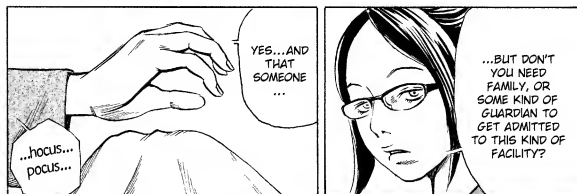


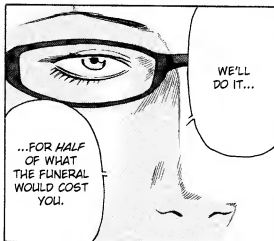
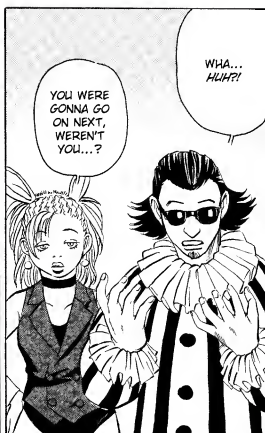
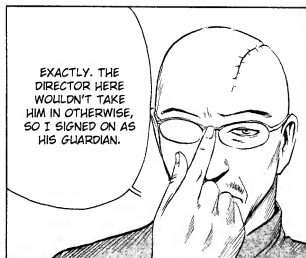


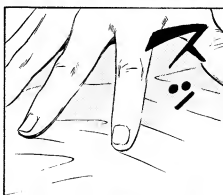
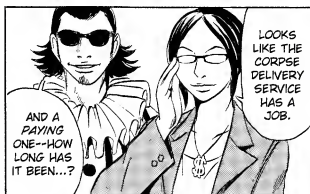


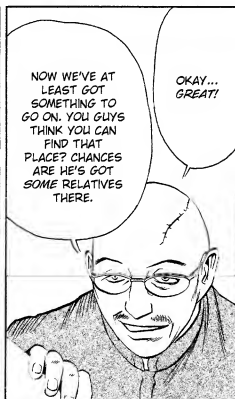
1st delivery
スタンド・ステイル
stand still

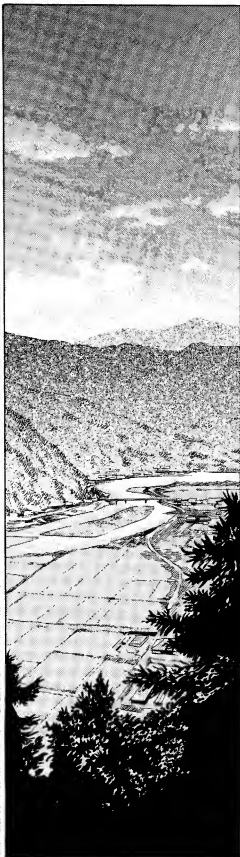
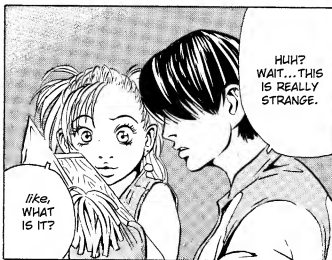














AND YOU'RE
THE ONE WHO
SAID, "GUESS
WE'LL FIGURE
IT OUT WHEN
WE ARRIVE"!

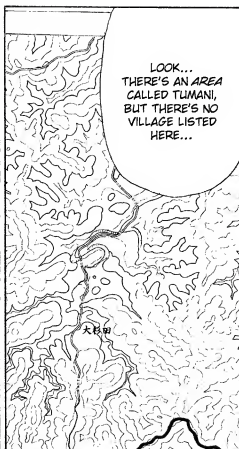
WHAT? WHY
DIDN'T YOU
CHECK THE MAP
EARLIER? AND I
THOUGHT YOU
SAID YOU'D
HEARD OF THE
VILLAGE
BEFORE?!



LOOK,
DON'T...

H?
チャン
チャカ
ポン

...HCH?



LOOK...
THERE'S AN AREA
CALLED TUMANI,
BUT THERE'S NO
VILLAGE LISTED
HERE...



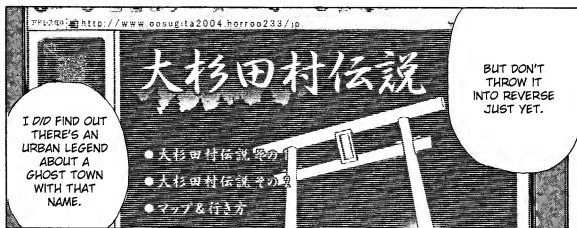
--WHAT? IT
DOESN'T
EXIST?!

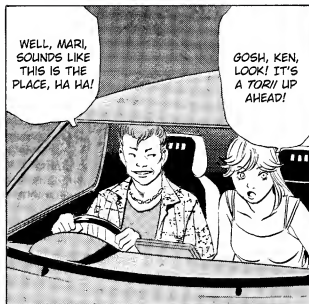


OH, IT'S SASAKI.



SURPRISED IT
WORKS OUT
HERE. HEY,
GLAD YOU
CALLED. TURNS
OUT IT'S LISTED
ON THE MAP,
BUT IT--





WELL, MARI,
SOUNDS LIKE
THIS IS THE
PLACE, HA HA!

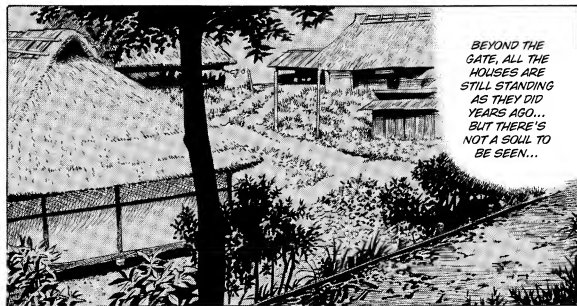
GOSH, KEN,
LOOK! IT'S
A TORII UP
AHEAD!



WHEN YOU SEE
THE OLD TORII
SHRINE GATE,
YOU KNOW
YOU'VE ARRIVED
IN TUMANI
VILLAGE.



SUPPOSEDLY THEY
TOOK THE TOWN
OFF THE MAPS
YEARS AGO. BUT
EVERY ONCE IN A
WHILE, SOMEONE
GOES THERE TO
CHECK OUT THE
LEGEND...



BEYOND THE
GATE, ALL THE
HOUSES ARE
STILL STANDING
AS THEY DID
YEARS AGO...
BUT THERE'S
NOT A SOUL TO
BE SEEN...



HA HA HA!
SEE? JUST
A BUNCH OF
DUSTY OLD
BUILDINGS!



OH, DON'T
BE SUCH A
WORRY-
WART, MARI!
IT'S ONLY
A LEGEND!

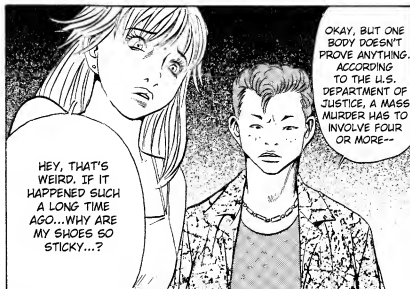
JEEPERS, IT
S-U-R-R-E IS
SPOOKY AROUND
HERE! HEY, IF
THIS IS REALLY
TUMANI VILLAGE,
AREN'T WE
IN...DANGER?



UM...
OKAY.



NOW IF
YOU'RE
SATISFIED
THERE'S
NO MASS
MURDERERS
HERE, LET'S
GO BACK TO
THE CAR AND
HAVE SEX!



HEY, THAT'S
WEIRD. IF IT
HAPPENED SUCH
A LONG TIME
AGO...WHY ARE
MY SHOES SO
STICKY...?

OKAY, BUT ONE
BODY DOESN'T
PROVE ANYTHING.
ACCORDING
TO THE U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF
JUSTICE, A MASS
MURDER HAS TO
INVOLVE FOUR
OR MORE--



**KYAAA!
HE'S
D-D-D-
DEAD!**



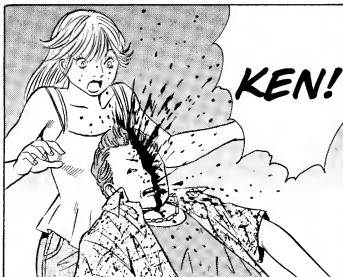
I DUNNO...
LOOKS LIKE
A MEAT
CLEAVER...



EVERYONE
WHO
COMES
HERE...
MUST DIE...



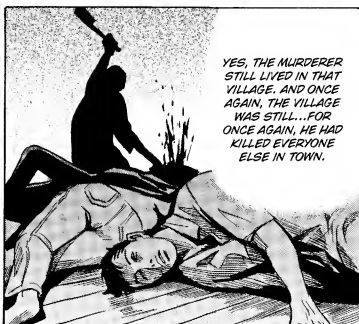
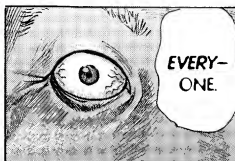
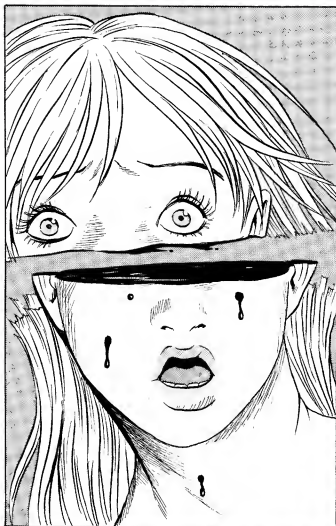
EVERYONE...
NEEDS TO
DIE...

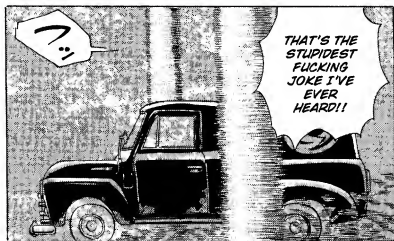


KEN!

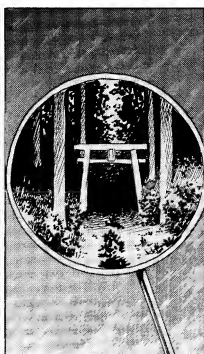


WH-
WHAT'S
THAT?!

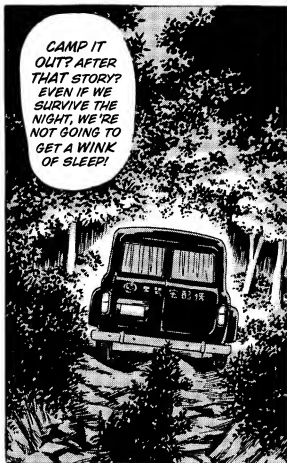




THAT'S THE
STUPIDEST
FUCKING
JOKE I'VE
EVER
HEARD!!



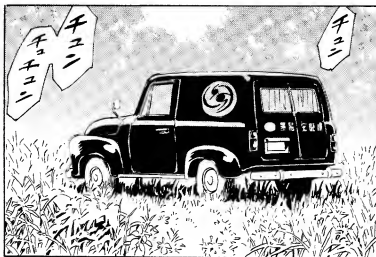
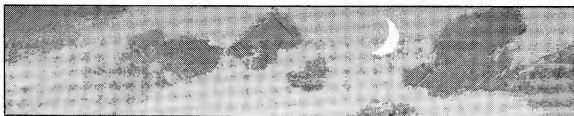
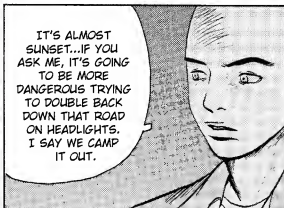
CAMP IT
OUT? AFTER
THAT STORY?
EVEN IF WE
SURVIVE THE
NIGHT, WE'RE
NOT GOING TO
GET A WINK
OF SLEEP!

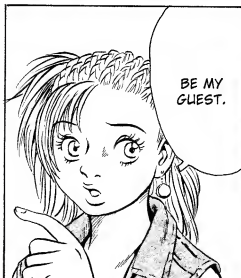
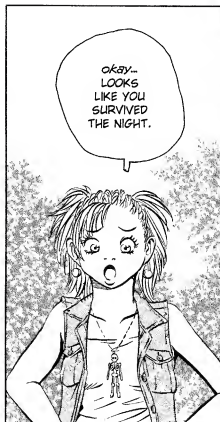


J-J-
JEEPERS,
IT SURE IS
SPOOKY
AROUND
HERE...!



IT'S ALMOST
SUNSET...IF YOU
ASK ME, IT'S GOING
TO BE MORE
DANGEROUS TRYING
TO DOUBLE BACK
DOWN THAT ROAD
ON HEADLIGHTS.
I SAY WE CAMP
IT OUT.

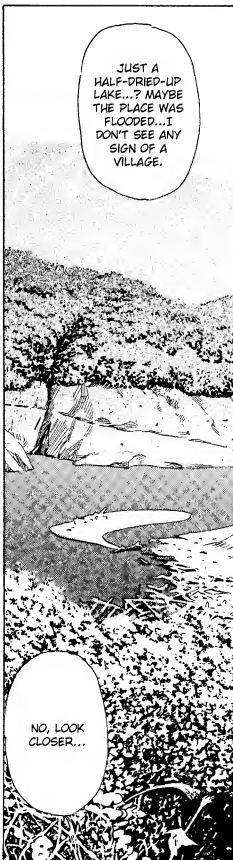




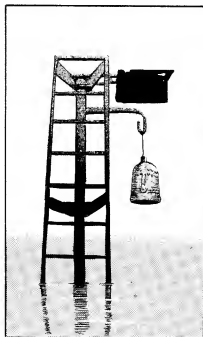
...I THINK
THIS IS WHERE
TUMANI USED
TO BE.

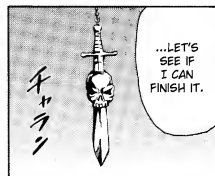


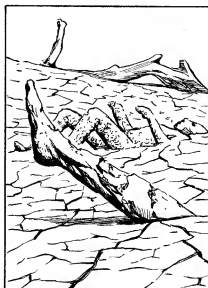
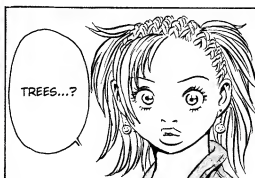
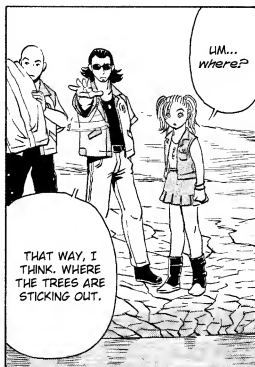
JUST A
HALF-DRIED-UP
LAKE...? MAYBE
THE PLACE WAS
FLOODED...I
DON'T SEE ANY
SIGN OF A
VILLAGE.

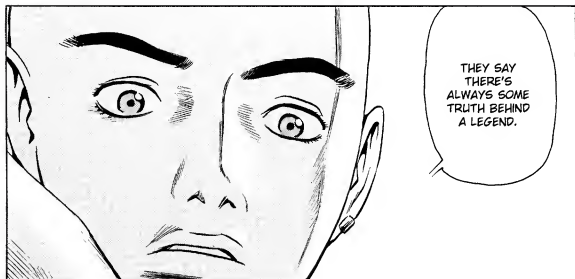


NO, LOOK
CLOSER...









SOMETIMES WHEN A CORPSE IS IN WET GROUND, OR UNDERWATER, IN ALKALINE CONDITIONS... AND IF THE AIR DOESN'T GET TO THEM...THE FAT IN THEIR BODIES UNDERGOES A CHEMICAL CHANGE INSTEAD OF ROTTING completely.

huh?

I DON'T GET IT, THOUGH...THEY SURE AREN'T RECENT LIKE THE STORY, BUT YOU'D THINK IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED SO LONG AGO THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY BODIES LEFT AT ALL. THESE GUYS LOOK LIKE THEY TURNED INTO, I DUNNO, SOAP HALFWAY.

THESE BODIES WERE HACKED UP, JUST LIKE THE STORY.

OLD-FASHIONED SOAP WAS MADE BY COMBINING ALKALINE LYE WITH VEGETABLE FAT. THE SAME THING CAN HAPPEN TO HUMAN TISSUE, TOO. THE MEDICAL TERM IS ADIPOCERE... PEOPLE ALSO JUST CALL IT GRAVE WAX.

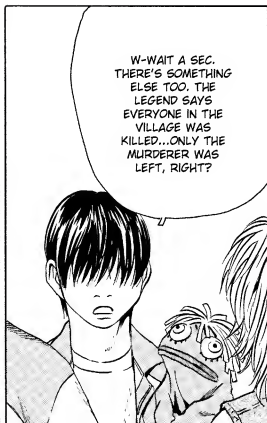
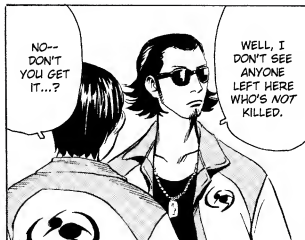
YEAH. THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY DID.

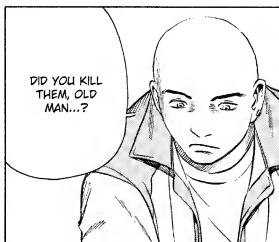
like, I'M NOT MAKING ALL THIS UP, YOU KNOW!

BUT, YOU KNOW, I'LL BET IT DOESN'T GET YOU FRESH AND CLEAN AS A WHISTLE.

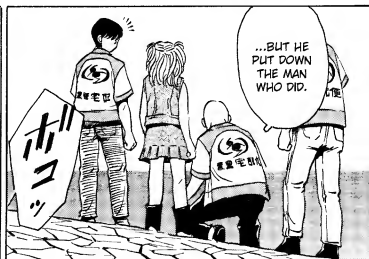
HUH. IT'S LIKE THAT OLD IRISH SPRING COMMERCIAL WHERE THE DUDE CUTS INTO THE SOAP.

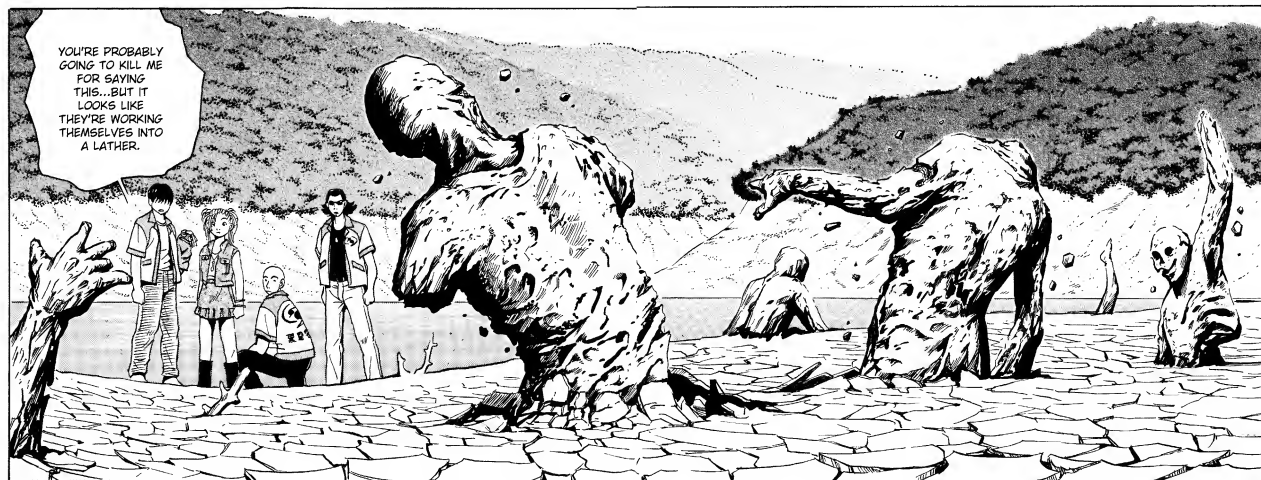
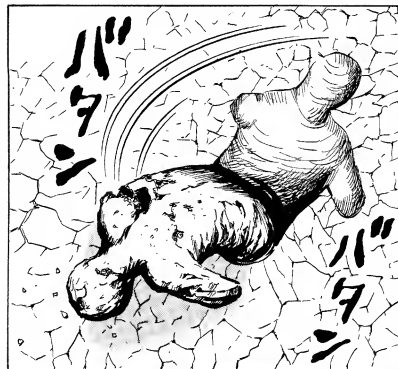
THEY PUT AN AIRTIGHT SEAL ON CASKETS IN AMERICA. THIS IS WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE IF YOU DUG UP ANYONE EMBALMED THERE IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS.

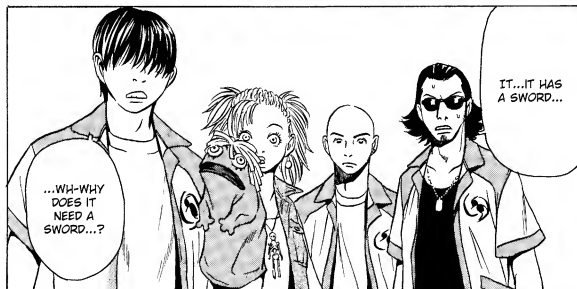
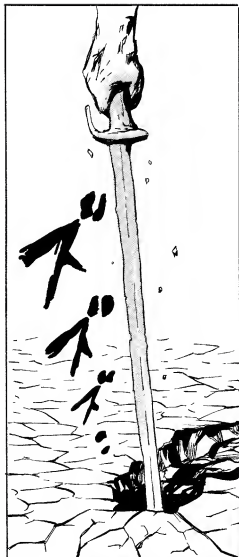


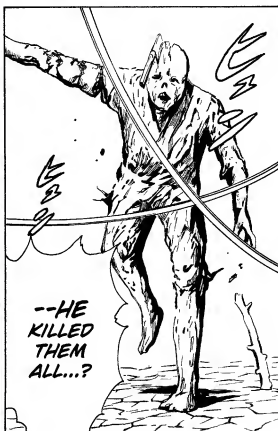


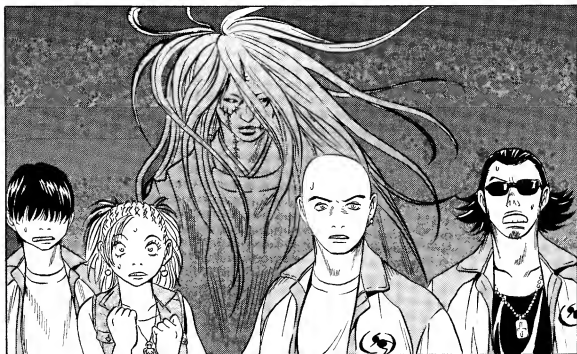


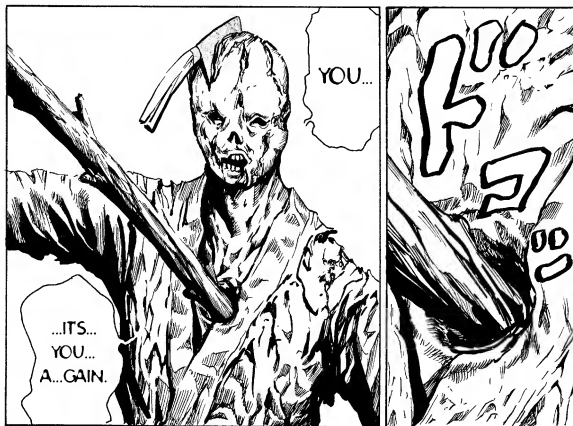













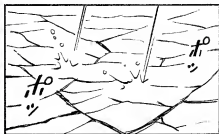




AFTER THE JAPANESE
ARMY TOOK CONTROL
OF THE CITY OF
NANKING IN DECEMBER
1937, THERE WAS A
HORRIFIC MASSACRE
OF CIVILIANS THAT
TOOK PLACE OVER
THE FOLLOWING
SIX WEEKS.

ONE OF THE
SOLDIERS
INVOLVED HAD
COME FROM A
TINY TOWN IN
FUKUSHIMA
NAMED TUMANI
VILLAGE. WHEN
HE RETURNED
HOME ON
LEAVE...

...MAYBE
BECAUSE HE
KNEW WHAT
HE WOULD
HAVE TO DO.

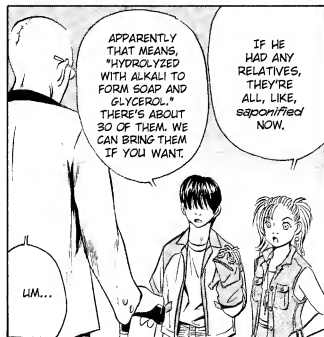




WHY DIDN'T
YOU LEAVE
HIM THERE?
YOU'RE ALL
USELESS.



...HE GAVE TO
THE PEOPLE OF
TUMANI...WHAT
HE HAD GIVEN
TO THE PEOPLE OF
NANKING.



APPARENTLY
THAT MEANS,
"HYDROLYZED
WITH ALKALI TO
FORM SOAP AND
GLYCEROL."
THERE'S ABOUT
30 OF THEM. WE
CAN BRING THEM
IF YOU WANT.

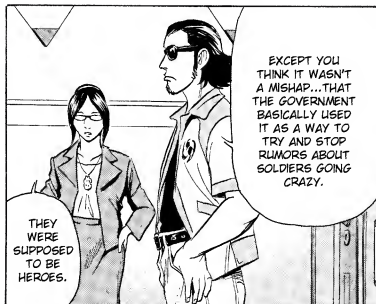
IF HE
HAD ANY
RELATIVES,
THEY'RE
ALL, LIKE,
saponified
NOW.

UM...



IN THE END,
I STILL HAVE
TO PAY FOR
THAT OLD
MAN'S
FUNERAL OUT
OF MY OWN
POCKET.

I WANT
MY
MONEY
BACK.

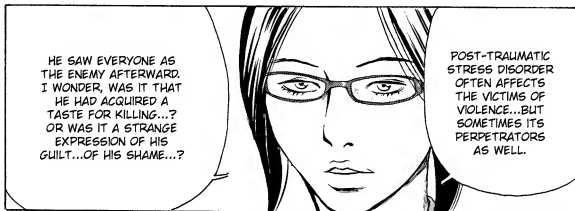


THEY
WERE
SUPPOSED
TO BE
HEROES.

EXCEPT YOU
THINK IT WASN'T
A MISHAP...THAT
THE GOVERNMENT
BASICALLY USED
IT AS A WAY TO
TRY AND STOP
RUMORS ABOUT
SOLDIERS GOING
CRAZY.



I DID SOME
MORE RESEARCH
WHILE YOU WERE
GONE...IT SEEMS
THAT DURING
THE WAR, THE
VILLAGE WAS
SUBMERGED IN
A DAM MISHAP.



HE SAW EVERYONE AS
THE ENEMY AFTERWARD.
I WONDER, WAS IT THAT
HE HAD ACQUIRED A
TASTE FOR KILLING...?
OR WAS IT A STRANGE
EXPRESSION OF HIS
GUILT...OF HIS SHAME...?

POST-TRAUMATIC
STRESS DISORDER
OFTEN AFFECTS
THE VICTIMS OF
VIOLENCE...BUT
SOMETIMES ITS
PERPETRATORS
AS WELL.



ABOUT
WHAT...?

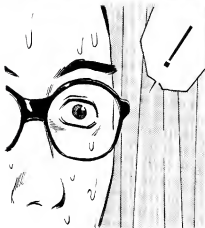
UM...

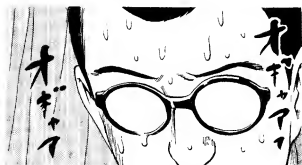


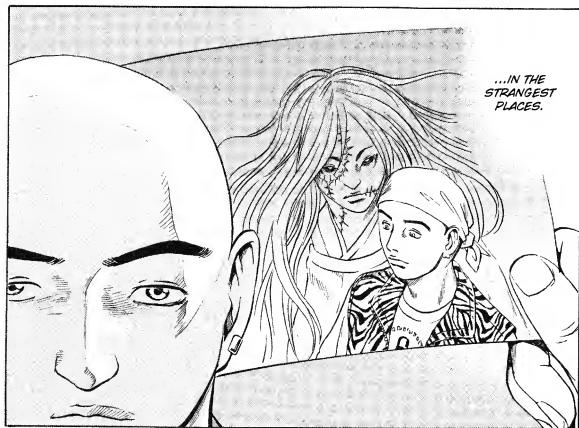
I WANTED
TO TALK
TO HIM
SOME
MORE.

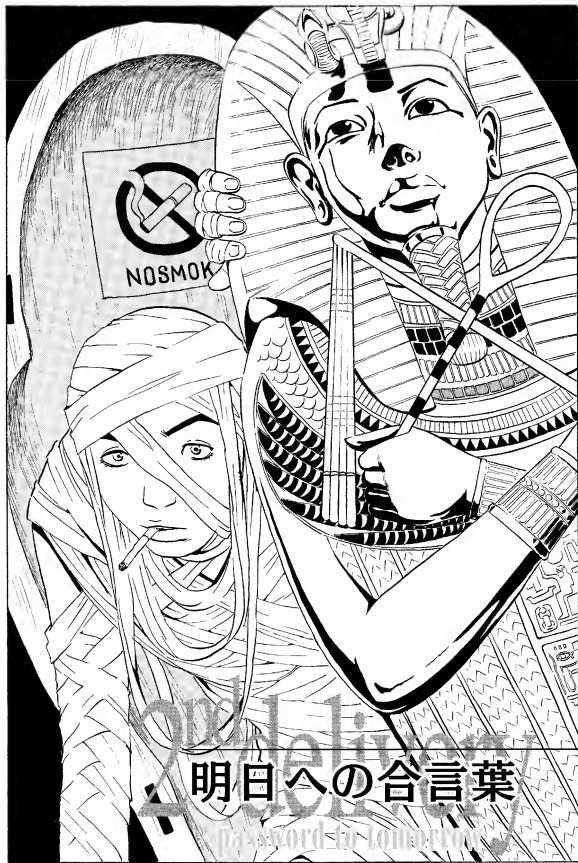


MAYBE THE
OLD MAN
KNEW, BUT
HE'S ASHES
NOW.

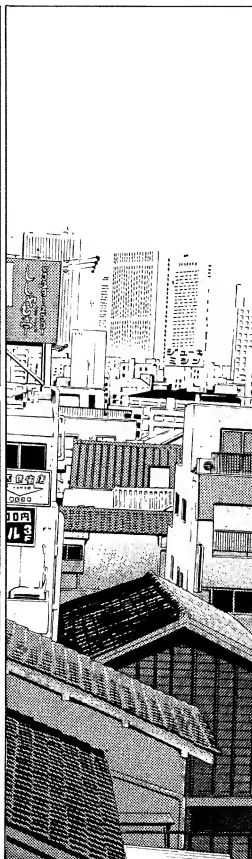
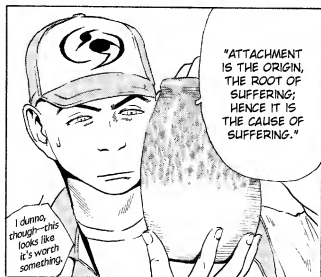








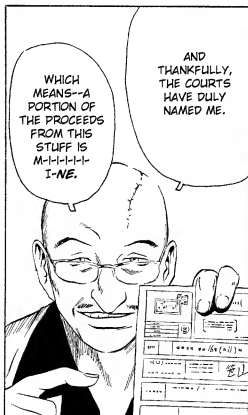
明日への合言葉





HEY!
BE CAREFUL
WITH THAT! THAT
LOOKS LIKE
IT'S WORTH
SOMETHING!

oops

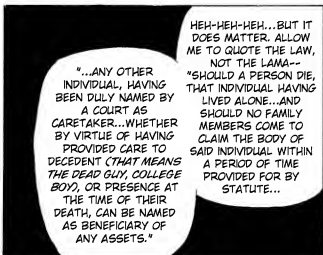


WHICH
MEANS--A
PORTION OF
THE PROCEEDS
FROM THIS
STUFF IS
M-I-I-I-I-I-
I-NE.

AND
THANKFULLY,
THE COURTS
HAVE DULY
NAMED ME.

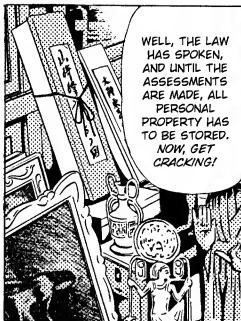


IT'S NOT LIKE
THIS STUFF
BELONGS TO
ANYONE NOW.
WHAT DOES IT
MATTER HOW
MUCH IT
COSTS...?



"...ANY OTHER
INDIVIDUAL, HAVING
BEEN DULY NAMED BY
A COURT AS
CARETAKER...WHETHER
BY VIRTUE OF HAVING
PROVIDED CARE TO
DECEDENT (THAT MEANS
THE DEAD GUY, COLLEGE
BOY), OR PRESENCE AT
THE TIME OF THEIR
DEATH, CAN BE NAMED
AS BENEFICIARY OF
ANY ASSETS."

HEH-HEH-HEH...BUT IT
DOES MATTER. ALLOW
ME TO QUOTE THE LAW,
NOT THE LAMA--
"SHOULD A PERSON DIE,
THAT INDIVIDUAL HAVING
LIVED ALONE...AND
SHOULD NO FAMILY
MEMBERS COME TO
CLAIM THE BODY OF
SAID INDIVIDUAL WITHIN
A PERIOD OF TIME
PROVIDED FOR BY
STATUTE..."





WHERE
IS IT?
WHERE'S
THAT
CORPSE?!

THAT'S
RIGHT!



IF SO, THEN
THERE GOES
SASAYAMA'S
CUT!

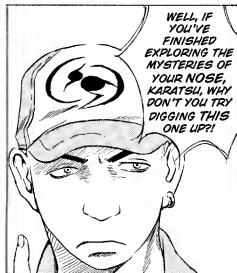


BUT THE
HOMEOWNER
WASN'T
MARRIED,
RIGHT?

COULD
HAVE BEEN
COMMON-
LAW.



WELL,
ACCORDING
TO MY
PENDULUM--
RIGHT HERE.



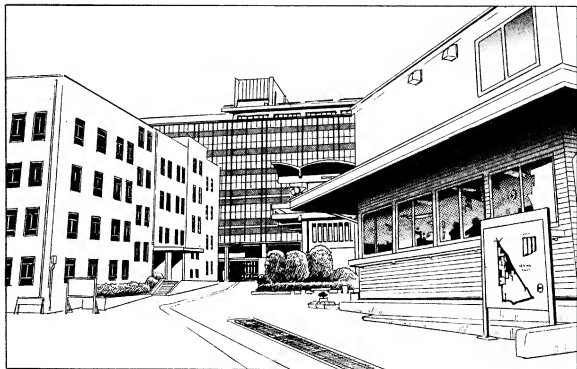
WELL, IF
YOU'VE
FINISHED
EXPLORING THE
MYSTERIES OF
YOUR NOSE,
KARATSU, WHY
DON'T YOU TRY
DIGGING THIS
ONE UP?!



...YOU HAVE
GOT TO BE
KIDDING ME.
IN A MUMMY
CASE...?

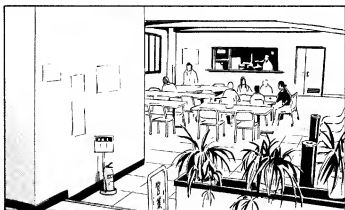
I DUNNO--
MAYBE
THAT'S THE
KIND OF
STUFF THEY
WERE INTO.





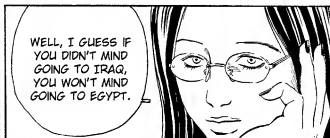
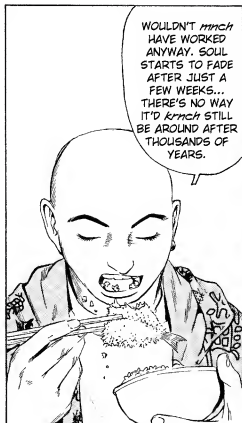
Can you finish 3
extra-large ramen...
**TO WIN THE 10,000 YEN
CHALLENGE?!?**

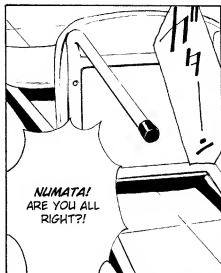
(Sponsored by Your Student Cafeteria)

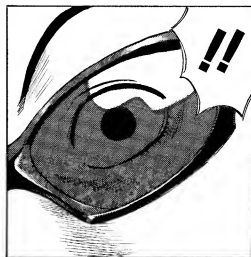
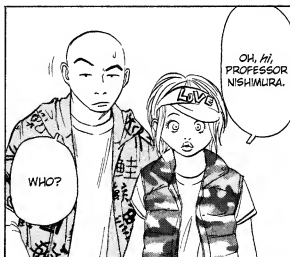


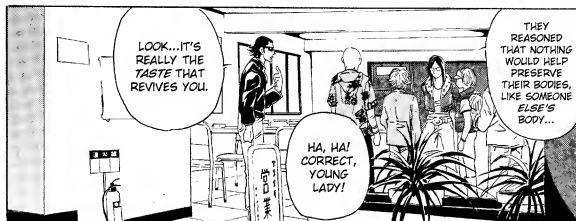
SO...
Amch...
IT WAS A
REAL...
shorp...
MUMMY...
HUH...?

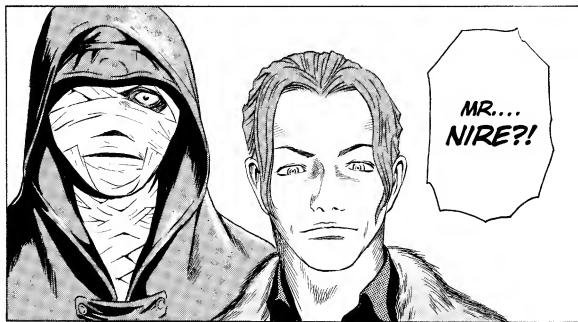


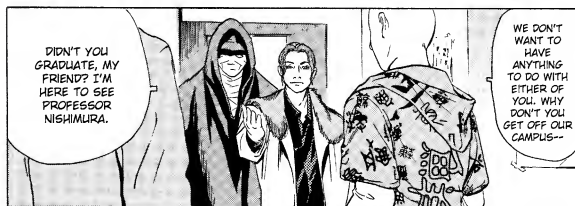


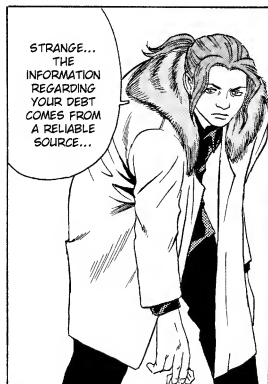
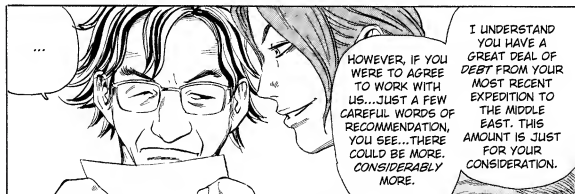


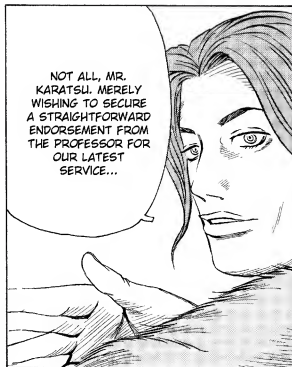




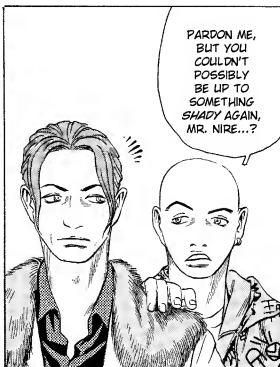








NOT ALL, MR. KARATSU. MERELY WISHING TO SECURE A STRAIGHTFORWARD ENDORSEMENT FROM THE PROFESSOR FOR OUR LATEST SERVICE...

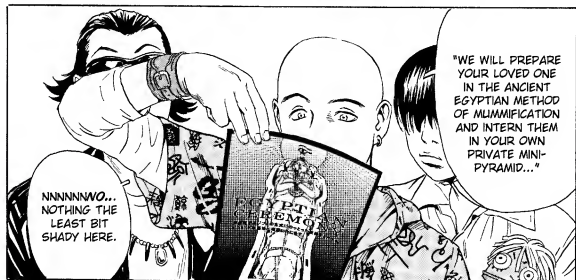


PARDON ME, BUT YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE UP TO SOMETHING SHADY AGAIN, MR. NIRE...?



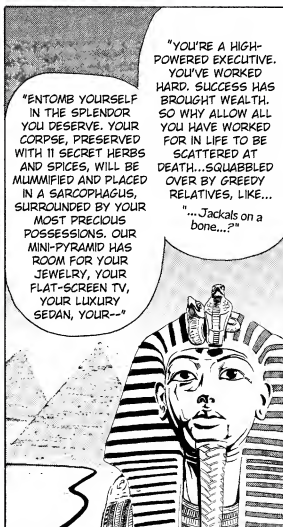
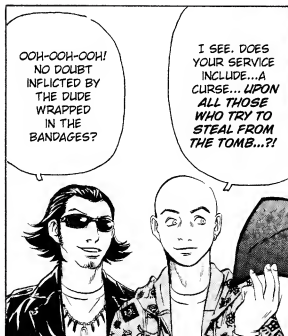
INDEED. WOULD YOU CARE TO SEE OUR BROCHURE?

LATEST SERVICE?



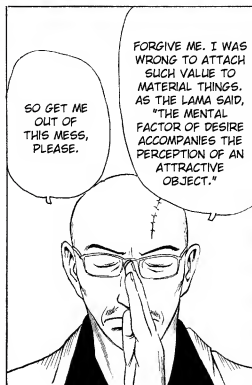
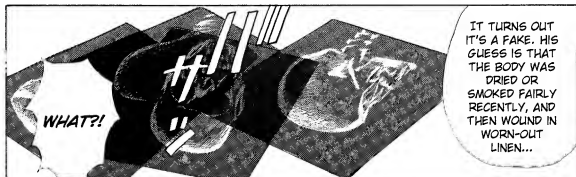
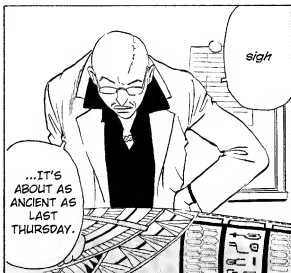
NNNNNNWO... NOTHING THE LEAST BIT SHADY HERE.

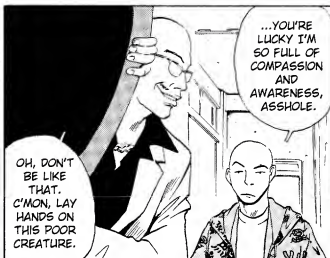
"WE WILL PREPARE YOUR LOVED ONE IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN METHOD OF MUMMIFICATION AND INTERN THEM IN YOUR OWN PRIVATE MINI-PYRAMID..."

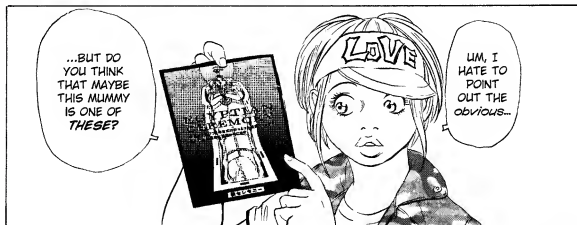
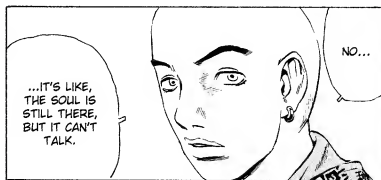
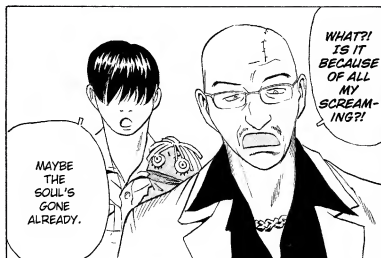


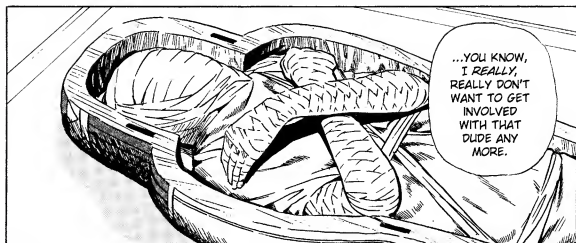


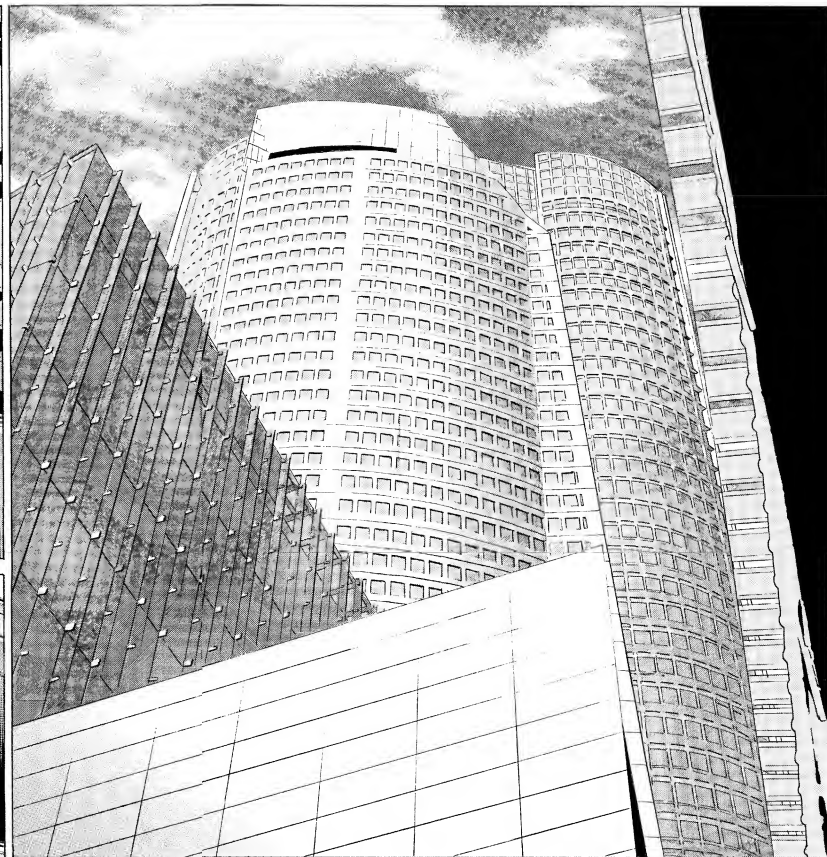


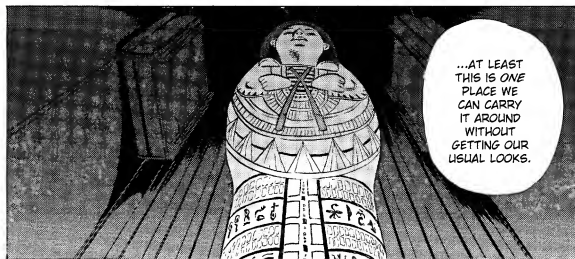
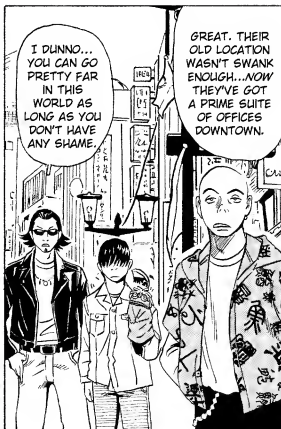












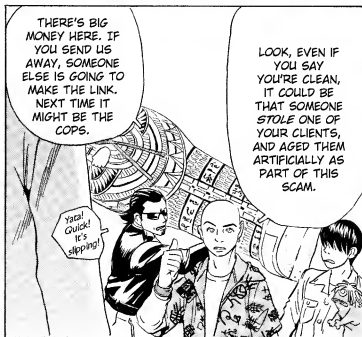


FOR YOU
SEE...

...HERE AT NIRE, WE
SEEK TO PRESERVE
OUR CLIENTS. WERE
YOU TO PRY OPEN
ONE OF OUR
SARCOPHAGI, YOU
WOULD FIND THEM
FRESH AS THE DAY
WE INSERTED A HOOK
UP THEIR NOSE,
AND PULLED OUT
THEIR BRAINS PIECE
BY PIECE.



...NO, I'M
AFRAID THAT
RAGGED
THING, WITH ITS
WITHERED
FLESH, AND
TATTY OLD
LINEN, ISN'T ONE
OF OURS, BOYS.



THERE'S BIG
MONEY HERE. IF
YOU SEND US
AWAY, SOMEONE
ELSE IS GOING TO
MAKE THE LINK.
NEXT TIME IT
MIGHT BE THE
COPS.

Yaaa!
Quick!
It's
slipping!

LOOK, EVEN IF
YOU SAY
YOU'RE CLEAN,
IT COULD BE
THAT SOMEONE
STOLE ONE OF
YOUR CLIENTS,
AND AGED THEM
ARTIFICIALLY AS
PART OF THIS
SCAM.



DON'T GIVE
THAT
BULLSHIT,
NIRE--YOU'RE
THE ONLY ONE
IN JAPAN
DOING THIS!



ALL RIGHT...
COME WITH
ME.



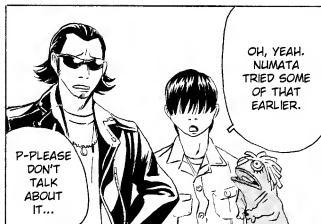
I'LL
SHOW
YOU HOW
WE DO
THINGS.



CHINESE?
NOT
EGYPTIAN?

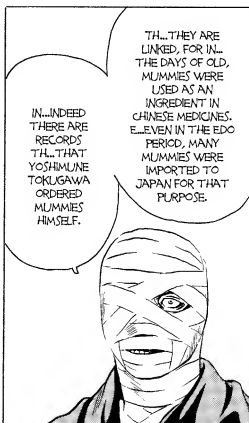
IN ADDITION TO
HIS EMBALMER'S
LICENSE--A RARE
SKILL IN THIS
COUNTRY, AS
YOU KNOW--HE
IS CERTIFIED AS
A DOCTOR
OF CHINESE
MEDICINES.

LET ME
INTRODUCE
MR. SHINJI
ONCE
AGAIN...NOW
THAT YOU
WILL BE
PRIVILEGED
TO SEE HIS
EXPERT HAND
AT WORK.



P-PLEASE
DON'T
TALK
ABOUT
IT...

OH, YEAH.
NUMATA
TRIED SOME
OF THAT
EARLIER.



IN...INDEED
THERE ARE
RECORDS
TH...THAT
YOSHIMUNE
TOKUGAWA
ORDERED
MUMMIES
HIMSELF.

TH...THEY ARE
LINKED, FOR IN...
THE DAYS OF OLD,
MUMMIES WERE
USED AS AN
INGREDIENT IN
CHINESE MEDICINES.
E...EVEN IN THE EDO
PERIOD, MANY
MUMMIES WERE
IMPORTED TO
JAPAN FOR THAT
PURPOSE.



PLEASE...
I'M
BEGGING
YOU...

G...GOOD FOR
CURING
PROBLEMS OF
THE LIVER AND
SPLEEN. ALSO
E...FFECTIVE
WITH
RESPIRATORY
AILMENTS.



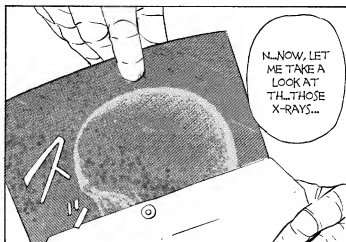
HMM...TH...
THE
AUDITORY
OSSICLES
ARE STILL
PRESENT...

...A...AND...
THE HEART
IS MISSING.
TH...THIS IS
DEFINITELY
A FAKE.

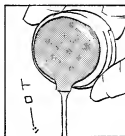
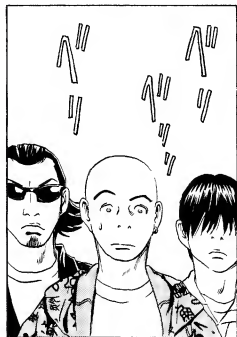
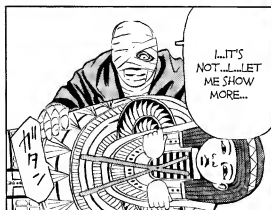
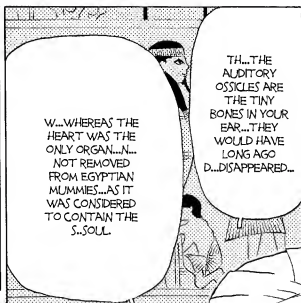


YEAH, AND IF
HE DOESN'T
SHUT UP,
YOU'RE ABOUT
TO SEE IT
EMERGE FROM
THE PAST!

JUST THINK,
NUMATA,
YOU HAD
THOUSANDS
OF YEARS OF
HISTORY IN
YOUR MOUTH!



N...NOW, LET
ME TAKE A
LOOK AT
TH...THOSE
X-RAYS...





TH...THAT WAS
TRUE IN
ANCIENT EGYPT
AND IT IS TRUE
HERE...AT
N...NIRE
CEREMONY.

TH...THE
UNDERSIDE OF
THIS LINEN
WRAP...SH...
SHOULD HAVE
HIEROGLYPHS
WRITTEN UPON
IT...TH...THE
NAME OF THE
INDIVIDUAL...AND
PRAYERS TO
THEIR GODS...

OB...OBSERVE
HOW NOTHING
IS WRITTEN
UPON THE
B...BANDAGES...



...THEN
WE'RE BACK
TO SQUARE
ONE.

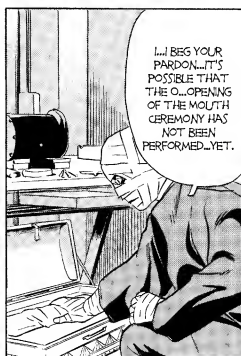
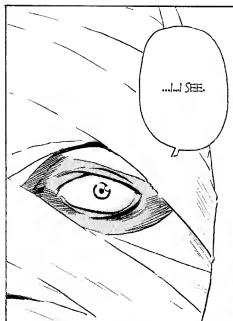


S...SPEAK...?

BUT IF THIS
IS A NEW
CORPSE,
THEN WHY
CAN'T I
SPEAK TO
IT...?



WHOEVER
PREPARED THIS
EITHER DOESN'T
KNOW MUCH
ABOUT
MUMMIES...OR
ASSUMES HIS
CUSTOMERS
ARE THAT
IGNORANT.





...IT IS THE FINAL
STEP OF THE...THE
MUMMIFICATION.

TH...THE OPENING OF
THE MOUTH CEREMONY
IS PERFORMED BY THE
P...PRIEST...TO ALLOW
THE DEAD TO EAT,
DRINK AND TALK...IN
THE AFTERLIFE.



...MY FLESH IS
ETERNAL...I SHALL
NOT WITHER
AWAY IN THE
ETERNAL LAND.



HONORED BE
THEE, O GREAT
FATHER
OSIRIS...MY FLESH
IS ETERNAL...



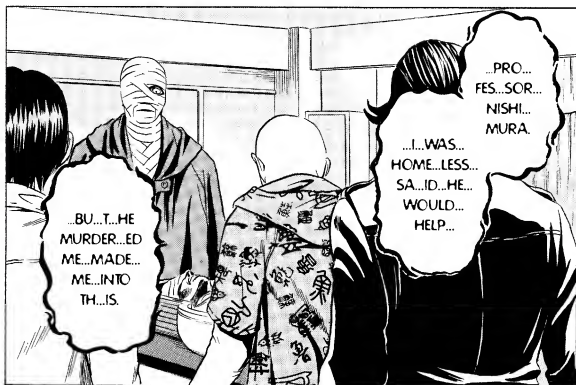
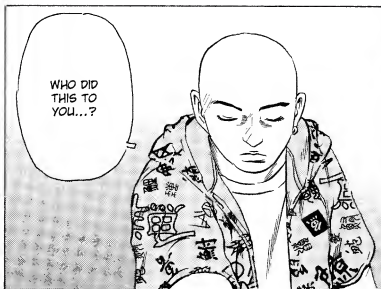
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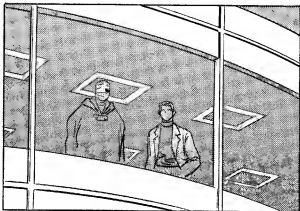
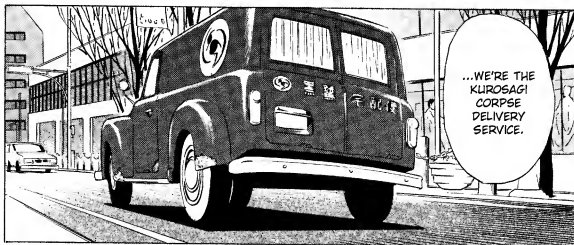
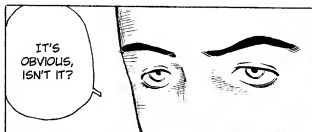


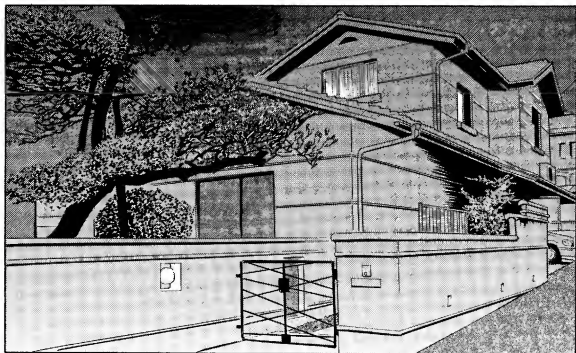
...I SHALL NOT
ROT, I SHALL
NOT CRUMBLE, I
SHALL NOT BE
FEASTED UPON
BY MAGGOTS...

...I SHALL
REMAIN...REMAIN
AND LIVE...I
SHALL AWAKEN,
ILLED WITH
STRENGTH AND
AT PEACE.









会員制古美術専門

現在力入れ価格

1,100,000,000 円

.....

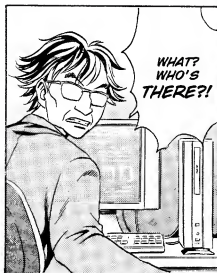


1115-BDC1822511

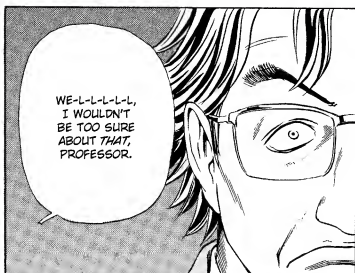
時代末期製造

目イラ及び色彩木竹

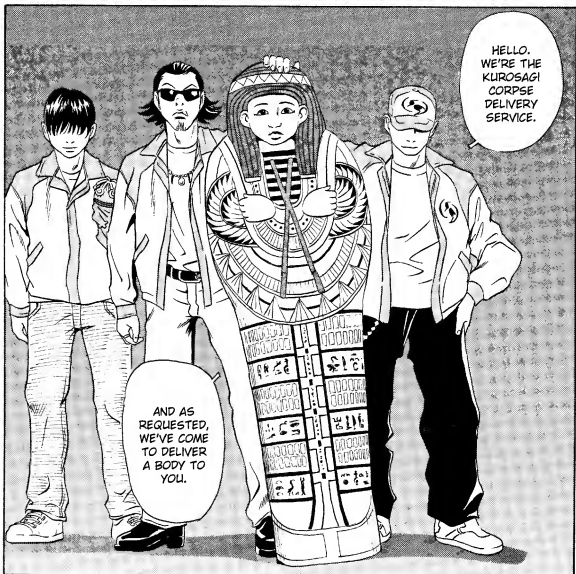
より此品三枚枚枚枚枚



WHAT?
WHO'S
THERE?!



WE-L-L-L-L-L,
I WOULDN'T
BE TOO SURE
ABOUT THAT,
PROFESSOR.



HELLO.
WE'RE THE
KUROSAKI
CORPSE
DELIVERY
SERVICE.

AND AS
REQUESTED,
WE'VE COME
TO DELIVER
A BODY TO
YOU.



YES, JUST
LIKE THE
NAME OF THE
COMPANY
SAYS. IT'S
OUR CLIENT'S
WISH.



HEY! YOU
KIDS! GET
THE HELL
OUT OF MY
HOME...

...LIT...



...WAIT...I SAW
YOU THE OTHER
DAY...WEREN'T
YOU STUDENTS
AT THE
UNIVERSITY...?

CLIENT
...?

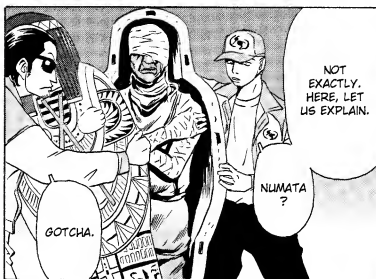
...DID YOU
SAY...
DELIVER A
BODY...?



BUSINESS?

THAT'S
WHY WE
HAD TO
GO INTO
THIS
BUSINESS.

YEAH, AND WE'VE GOT
A BEEF WITH THAT,
ACTUALLY. TELL ME,
DON'T PROFESSORS
EVER FEEL THE LEAST
BIT GUILTY OVER HOW
THEY LEAVE THEIR
STUDENTS
UNEMPLOYABLE...?



GOTCHA.

NOT
EXACTLY.
HERE, LET
US EXPLAIN.

NUMATA
?



OH, NOW I
GET IT.
SOMEONE'S
TRYING TO
RETURN THAT
MUMMY. WELL,
YOU TELL
THEM THERE'S
NO REFUNDS--

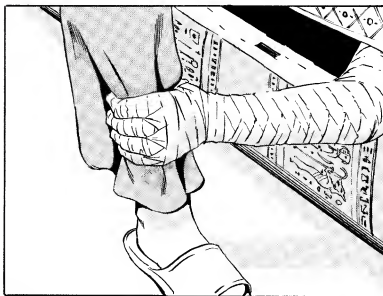




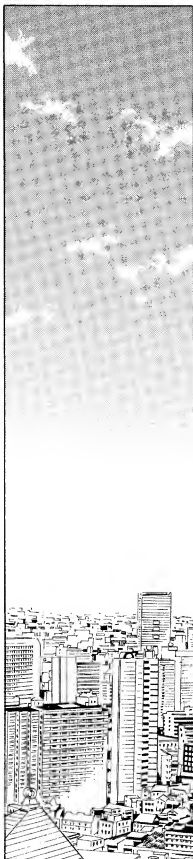
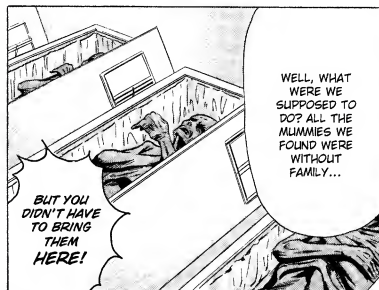


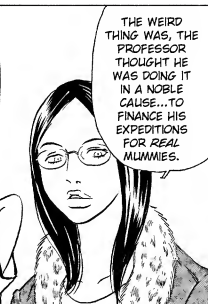
...SA...ID...
YOU...
WOULD...
HELP...

...BUT...
YOU
MADE...
ME...INTO
TH...IS...!

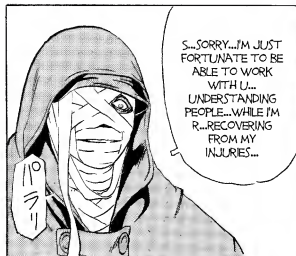












S...SORRY...I'M JUST
FORTUNATE TO BE
ABLE TO WORK
WITH U...
UNDERSTANDING
PEOPLE...WHILE I'M
R...RECOVERING
FROM MY
INJURIES...



P...
PSYCH!!!



SHINJI,
YOUR
BANDAGES
ARE COMING
LOOSE...



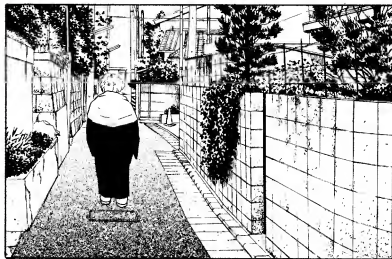
HEH-HEH-
HEH! HE'S A
MUMMY,
RIGHT? BIG
JOKE!

COME ON
DUDE,
YOU'RE
SCARY
ENOUGH
AS IS!



WAIT A
MINUTE...

TH...THANK
YOU...I FEEL
N...NAKED
WITHOUT
THEM.





3rd delivery
少しは私に愛を下さい
please give me a little love

TURNING CADAVERS INTO CASH

② Marketing Research: What do today's dead want?
 ③ People Skills: Our weakest point—why?
 ④ Why is it here to stay?

YOU CAN'T SPELL **CORPSE** WITHOUT **CORP-ORATION!** WE CAN COUNT ON OUR **CLIENTS** TO DECAY...BUT WE CAN'T ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN TO OUR **REVENUES!**

WHILE WE'VE STILL GOT SOME FLESH ON THESE BONES, WE NEED TO DIG OURSELVES OUT OF THIS HOLE IN THE GROUND!

REVENUES

TURNING CADAVERS INTO CASH

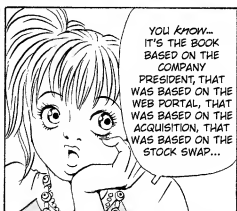
② Marketing Research: What do today's dead want?
 ③ People Skills: Our weakest point—why?
 ④ Why is it here to stay?

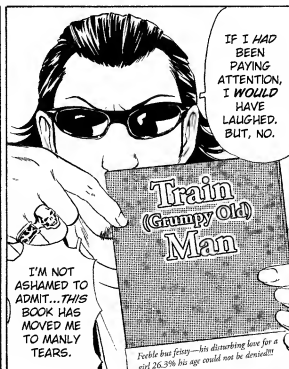
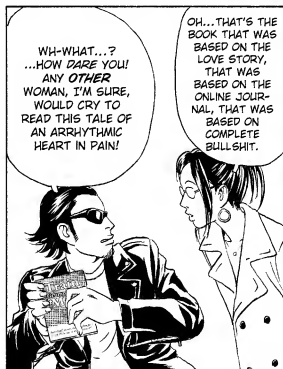
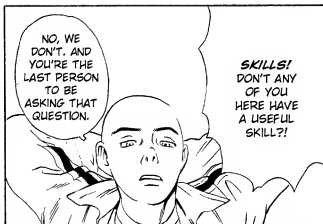
BLAH BLAH BLAH **SLOGAN!** BLAH BLAH **BUZZWORD** BLAH BLAH BLAH! **JARGON** BLAH BLAH BLAH-BLAH BLAH BLAH **CATCHPHRASE!**

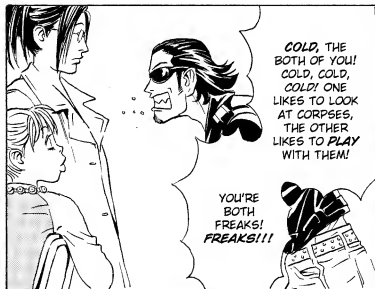
HE'S FINALLY MANAGED TO PUPPETEER HIMSELF.

...WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

TO PUT IT IN FAMILIAR TERMS, WE'VE GOT EXPENSES SPILLING OUT LIKE MAGGOTS--YET WITHOUT THE CORRESPONDING GROWTH SWELL OF PUTREFYING GAS!







COLD, THE
BOTH OF YOU!
COLD, COLD,
COLD! ONE
LIKES TO LOOK
AT CORPSES,
THE OTHER
LIKES TO *PLAY*
WITH THEM!

YOU'RE
BOTH
FREAKS!
FREAKS!!!

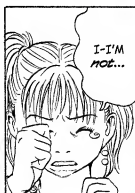


LIKE, NO. I
READ IT AND
RETURNED IT
FOR A
REFUND THE
NEXT DAY.



*JUUUUUST
KIDDING!* ♥

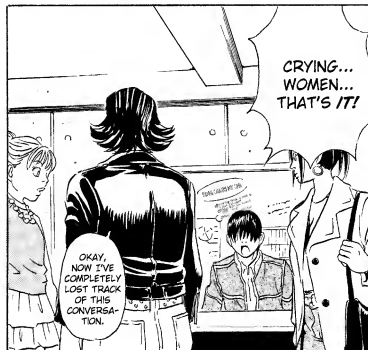
UH...I'M
SORRY...



I-I'M
NOT...

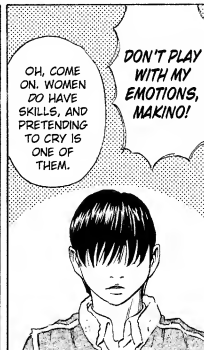


I-I'M
NOT A
FREAK...



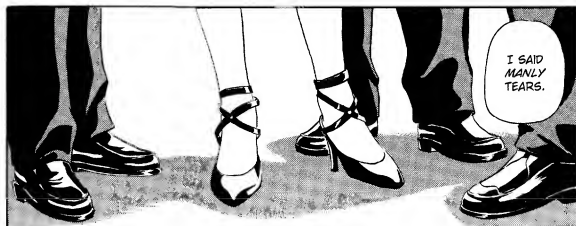
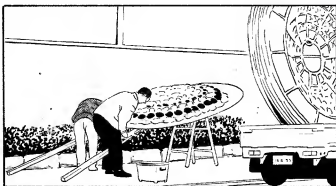
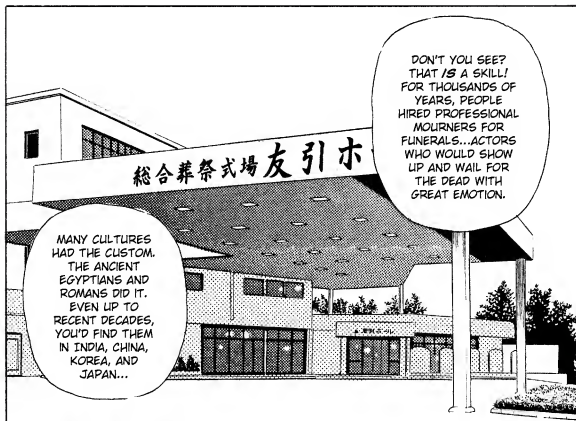
CRYING...
WOMEN...
THAT'S IT!

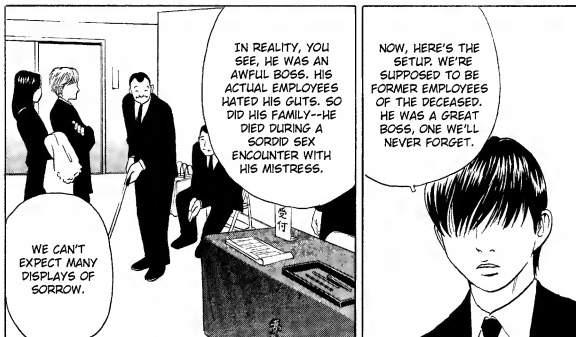
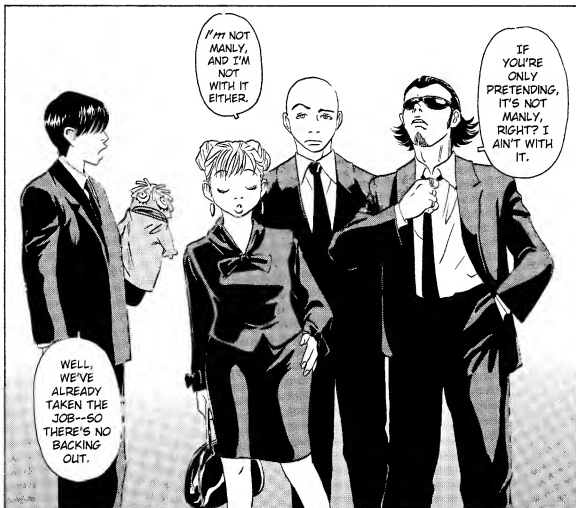
OKAY,
NOW I'VE
COMPLETELY
LOST TRACK
OF THIS
CONVERSA-
TION.



OH, COME
ON. WOMEN
DO HAVE
SKILLS, AND
PRETENDING
TO CRY IS
ONE OF
THEM.

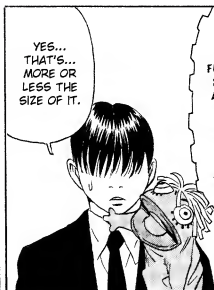
*DON'T PLAY
WITH MY
EMOTIONS,
MAKINO!*







MAN, AFTER
HEARING ALL
THAT, NOW I
AM STARTING
TO FEEL SORRY
FOR HIM.

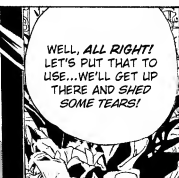


YES...
THAT'S...
MORE OR
LESS THE
SIZE OF IT.

BUT, THIS BEING A
FUNERAL AND ALL, PEOPLE
STILL HAVE TO KEEP UP
APPEARANCES--AND AS
NO ONE ELSE HERE
WOULD SHED A TEAR
EVEN IF YOU SHOVED
THEM INTO A FUCKING
ONION CART,
THAT'S WHY WE WERE
HIRED TODAY.



WHAT...
YOU MEAN...
RIGHT
NOW?!

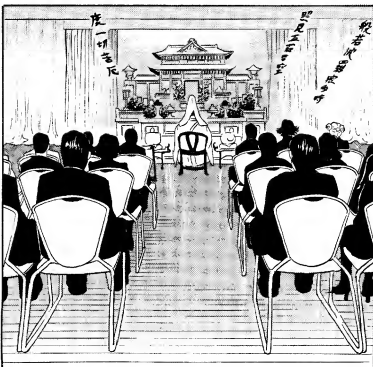


WELL, **ALL RIGHT!**
LET'S PUT THAT TO
USE...WE'LL GET UP
THERE AND **SHED**
SOME TEARS!



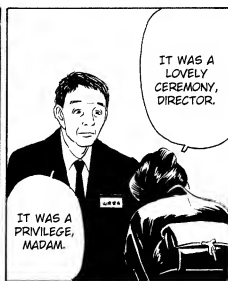
IDIOT...
I CAN'T
TURN IT
ON AND
OFF.

OKAY,
LET IT
FLOW.

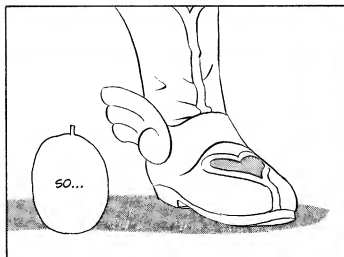
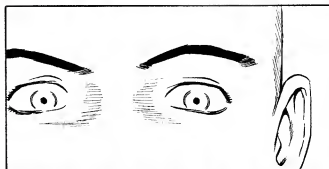
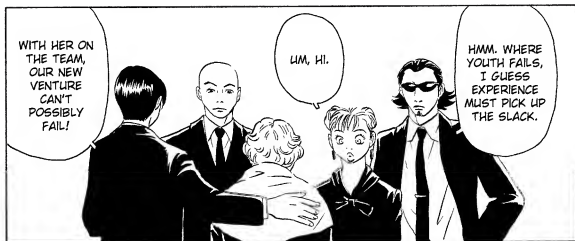


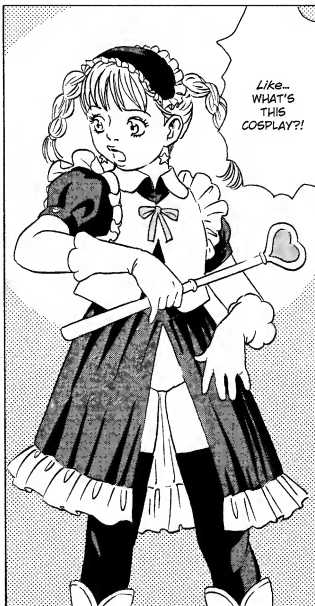














WELL, JUST TAKE IT ANYWAY. WORD GOT OUT AFTER THAT BUSINESSMAN'S FUNERAL...WE'VE BEEN GETTING REQUESTS FROM FUNERAL HOMES ALL OVER.

NAH, MAN, ONIONS DON'T WORK ON ME. IT'S LIKE A MUTANT POWER.



NO, YOU TWO ARE ON A DIFFERENT JOB. HERE, YOU MIGHT NEED THIS.

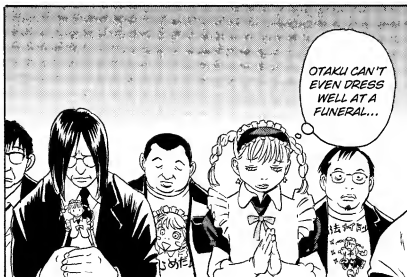
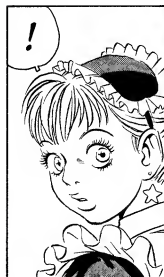
OKAY, SO WHO DO KARATSU AND I GOTTA BE? HER MASCOTS? WHAT KIND OF MASCOTS DOES SHE GOT? I HOPE IT'S SOMETHING COOL, LIKE BEARS.



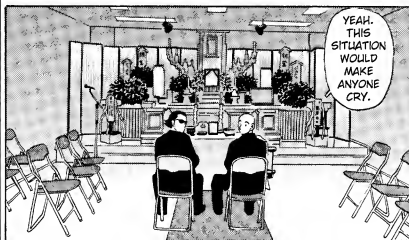
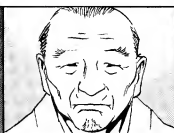
OF COURSE THERE'S MORE! WE'VE GOT TO MAKE UP FOR ALL THE MONEY WE'VE LOST IN THE PAST! NEXT IS A MANGA ARTIST--TONE INHALATION--AND THEN, THERE'S...

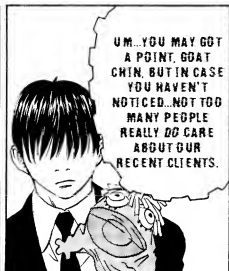
THERE'S MORE?

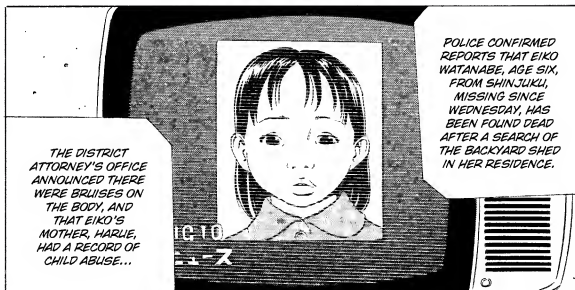
OKAY. FIRST UP TODAY, AN OLD MAN NEGLECTED IN LIFE BY CHILDREN WHO NOW WISH TO SHOW THEIR LOVE, THEN A SHUT-IN WHO DIED OF...IT SAYS HERE "ENNUI"... THEN--



OTAKU CAN'T EVEN DRESS WELL AT A FUNERAL...

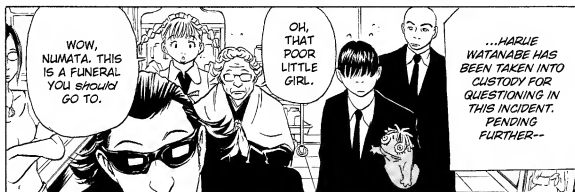






THE DISTRICT
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
ANNOUNCED THERE
WERE BRUISES ON
THE BODY, AND
THAT EIKO'S
MOTHER, HARUE,
HAD A RECORD OF
CHILD ABUSE...

POLICE CONFIRMED
REPORTS THAT EIKO
WATANABE, AGE SIX,
FROM SHINJUKU,
MISSING SINCE
WEDNESDAY, HAS
BEEN FOUND DEAD
AFTER A SEARCH OF
THE BACKYARD SHED
IN HER RESIDENCE.



WOW,
NUMATA. THIS
IS A FUNERAL
YOU SHOULD
GO TO.

OH,
THAT
POOR
LITTLE
GIRL.

...HARUE
WATANABE HAS
BEEN TAKEN INTO
CUSTODY FOR
QUESTIONING IN
THIS INCIDENT.
PENDING
FURTHER--

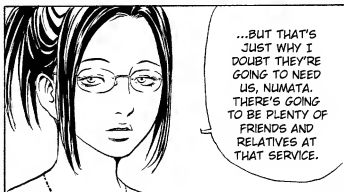


WHINER!
AT LEAST
YOU DIDN'T
HAVE TO
WEAR
THIS!

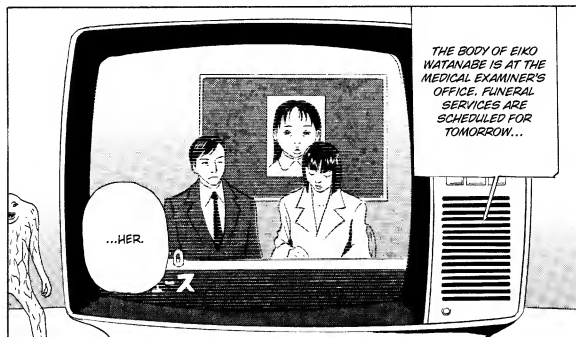
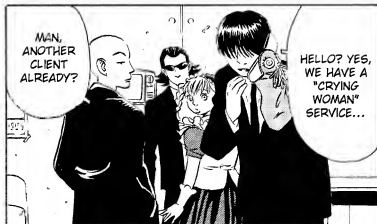


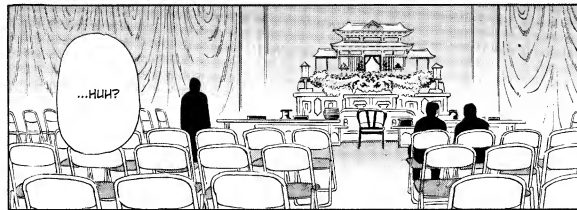
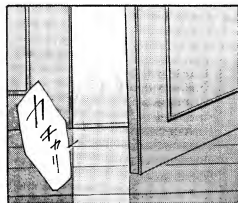
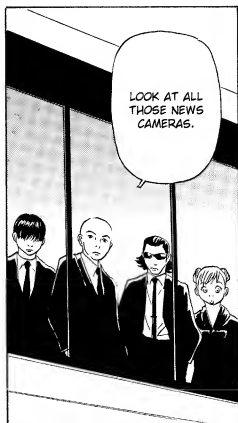
THIS ISN'T
PLAYING WITH MY
EMOTIONS. THIS IS
SOMETHING REAL
I'M FEELING
RIGHT NOW--

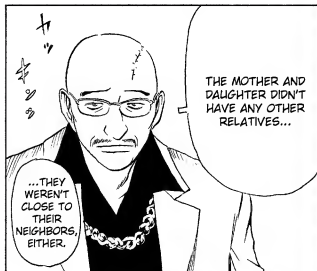
RIGHT...
THIS IS
EXACTLY
WHAT I
MEAN,
MAKINO.



...BUT THAT'S
JUST WHY I
DOUBT THEY'RE
GOING TO NEED
US, NUMATA.
THERE'S GOING
TO BE PLENTY OF
FRIENDS AND
RELATIVES AT
THAT SERVICE.





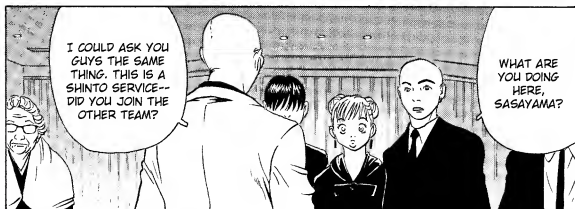


THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER DIDN'T HAVE ANY OTHER RELATIVES...

...THEY WEREN'T CLOSE TO THEIR NEIGHBORS, EITHER.

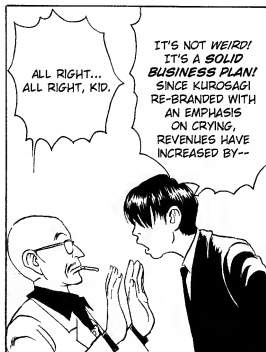


THAT'S WEIRD. NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE HERE YET.



I COULD ASK YOU GUYS THE SAME THING. THIS IS A SHINTO SERVICE-- DID YOU JOIN THE OTHER TEAM?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, SASAYAMA?



ALL RIGHT... ALL RIGHT, KID.

IT'S NOT WEIRD! IT'S A **SOLID BUSINESS PLAN!** SINCE KUROSAKI RE-BRANDED WITH AN EMPHASIS ON CRYING, REVENUES HAVE INCREASED BY--

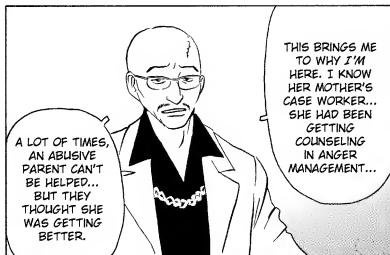


I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THAT'S MORE WEIRD FOR YOU GUYS--



PROFES-SIONAL MOURNERS, EH?





THIS BRINGS ME TO WHY I'M HERE. I KNOW HER MOTHER'S CASE WORKER... SHE HAD BEEN GETTING COUNSELING IN ANGER MANAGEMENT...





...HE...LP...ME...
THAT...T...MAN...
KILL...ED...ME...
TH...ERE...HE...
GOES...

MO...MMY...

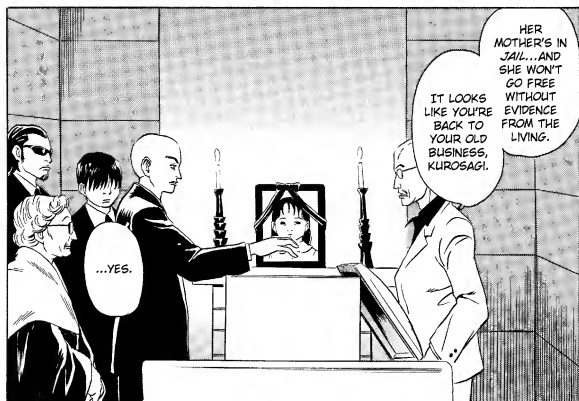


WH...ERE'S...MY...
MO...MMY...?...SHE'S...
NI...CE...TO...ME...
NOW...PLEA...SE...
LET...ME...SEE...MY...
MOM...MY...

...HE'S...
GO...NE...



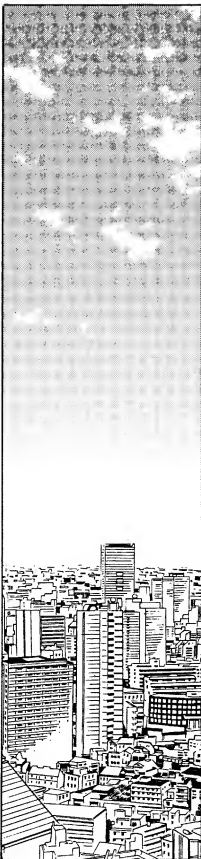
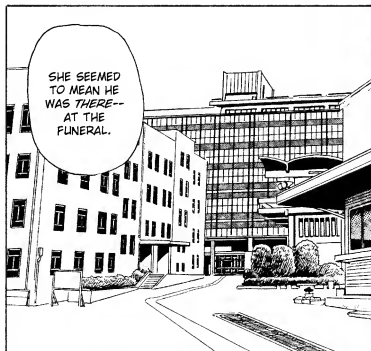
WHAT?
WHERE
IS
HE?!

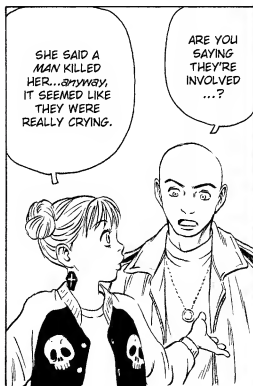
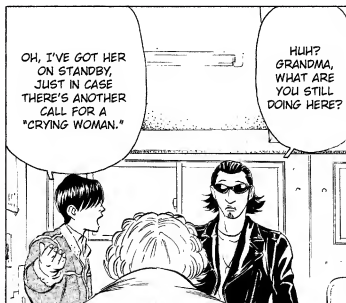


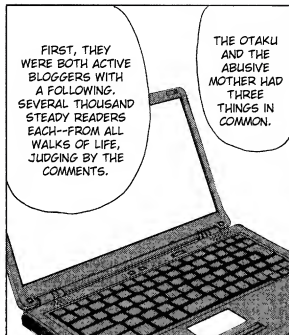
HER
MOTHER'S IN
JAIL...AND
SHE WON'T
GO FREE
WITHOUT
EVIDENCE
FROM THE
LIVING.

IT LOOKS
LIKE YOU'RE
BACK TO
YOUR OLD
BUSINESS,
KUROSAKI.

...YES.







FIRST, THEY WERE BOTH ACTIVE BLOGGERS WITH A FOLLOWING. SEVERAL THOUSAND STEADY READERS EACH--FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, JUDGING BY THE COMMENTS.

THE OTAKU AND THE ABUSIVE MOTHER HAD THREE THINGS IN COMMON.



READERS?



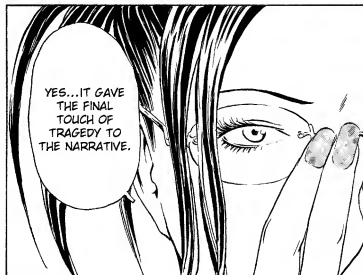
IT COULD BE THAT THEY'RE ALL READERS...



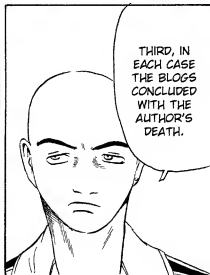
ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MOTHER BLOGGED ABOUT THE FACT THAT SHE TOO WAS ABUSED AS A CHILD. SHE WROTE OF HER WORRIES ON HOW SHE WAS STARTING TO DO THE SAME THING TO HER CHILD...AND HOW SHE WAS TRYING TO GET HELP...IT WAS GRIPPING STUFF.

SECOND, THE BLOGS WERE SAD, BUT PEOPLE FOUND THEM COMPELLING...THE OTAKU ALSO HAD CANCER--IT WAS WHAT PROMPTED HIM TO DECLARE HIS UNREQUITED LOVE FOR MUMUME-TAN.

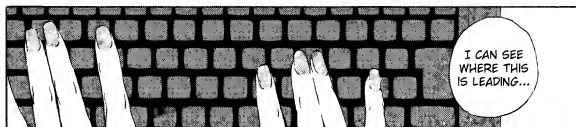
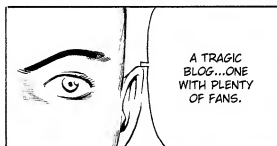
I think some of his more normal readers might not have realized she's a videogame character.

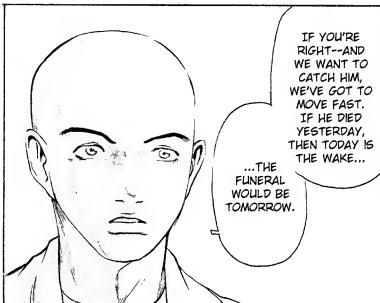
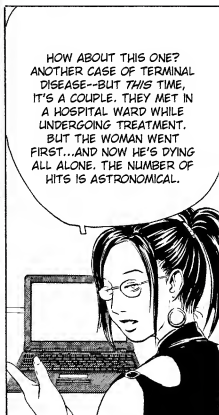
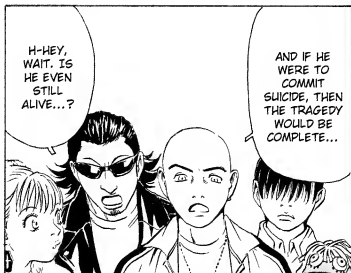


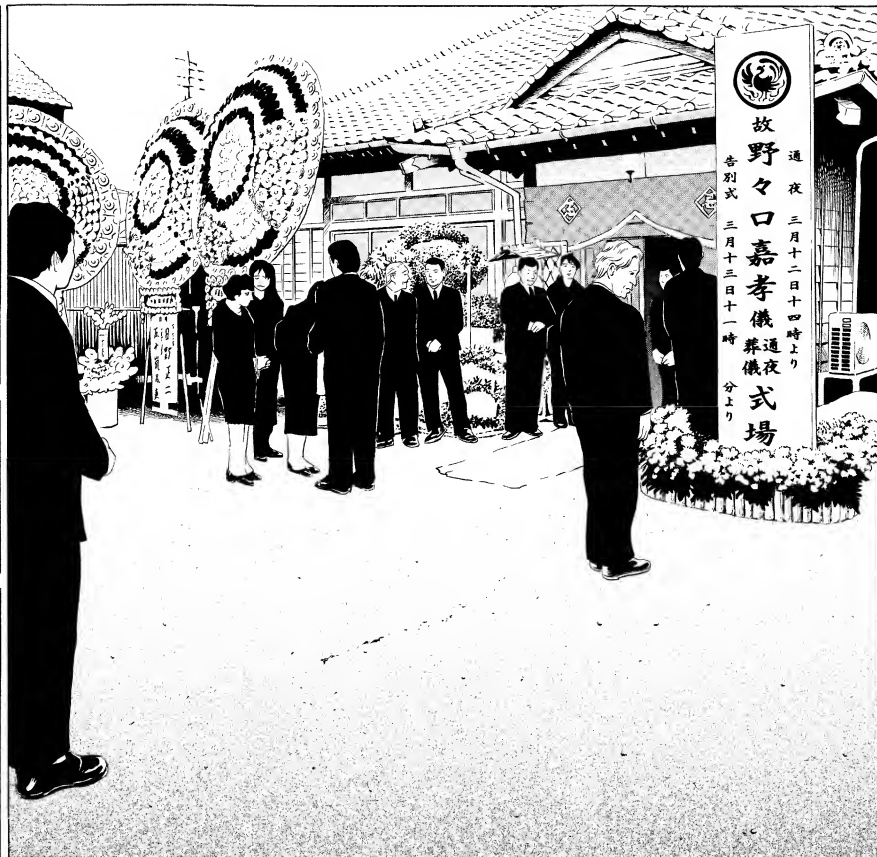
YES...IT GAVE THE FINAL TOUCH OF TRAGEDY TO THE NARRATIVE.

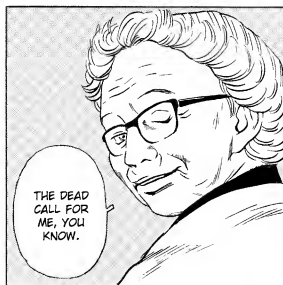
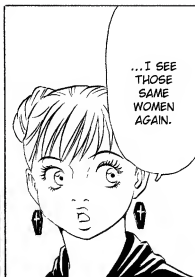
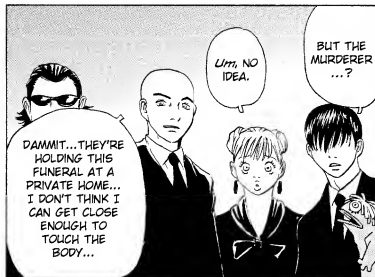


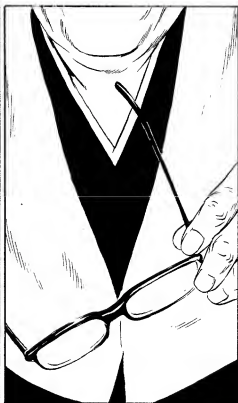
THIRD, IN EACH CASE THE BLOGS CONCLUDED WITH THE AUTHOR'S DEATH.

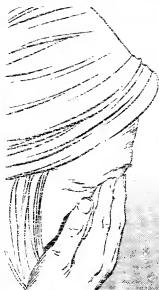
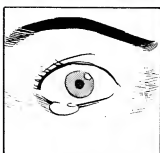
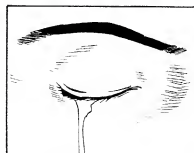
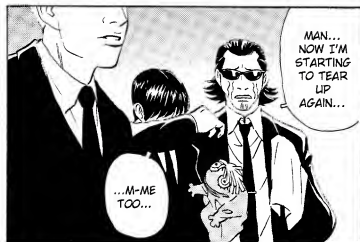


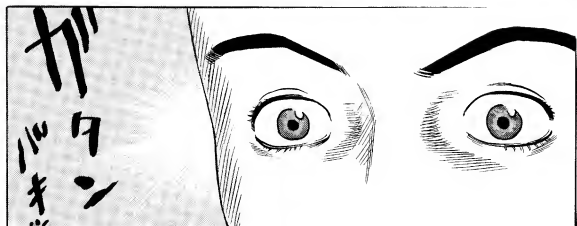
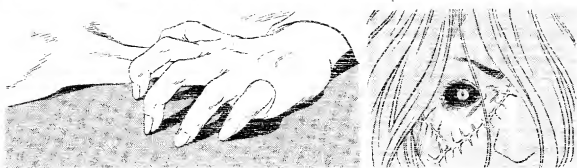
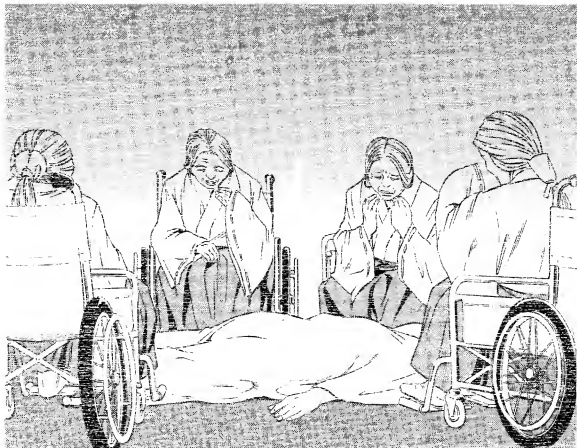










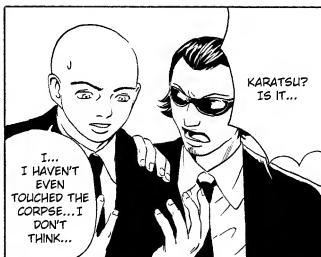


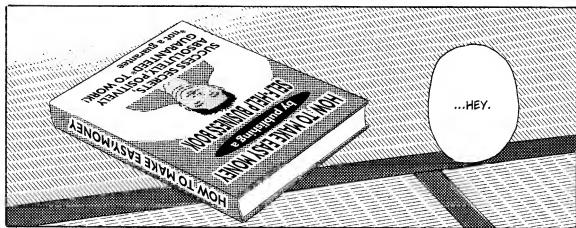


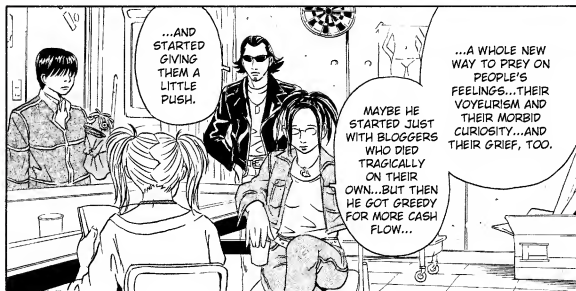
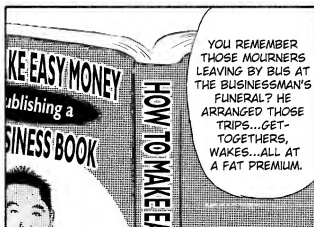
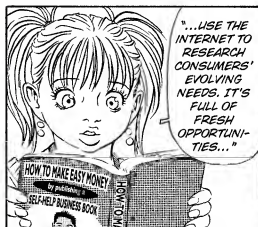
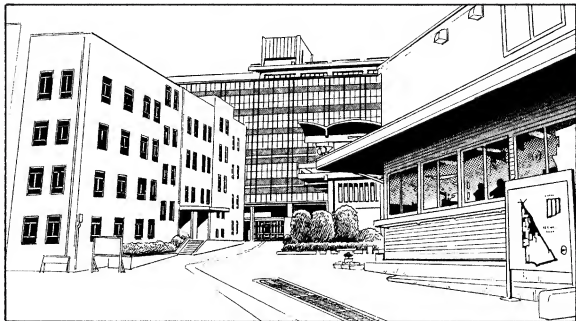
...H-HE
ROSE
FROM
THE
COFFIN!!

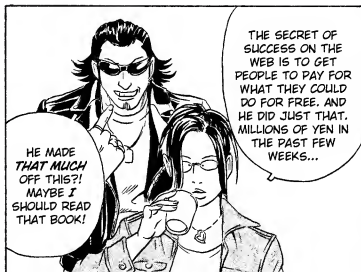
H-HE...

EEE
YAA
!!



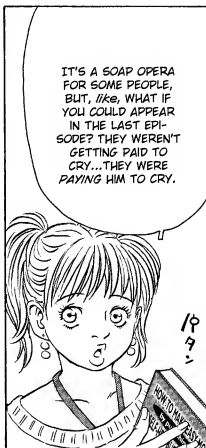




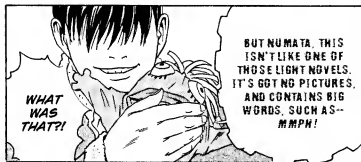


HE MADE
THAT MUCH
OFF THIS?!
MAYBE I
SHOULD READ
THAT BOOK!

THE SECRET OF
SUCCESS ON THE
WEB IS TO GET
PEOPLE TO PAY FOR
WHAT THEY COULD
DO FOR FREE. AND
HE DID JUST THAT.
MILLIONS OF YEN IN
THE PAST FEW
WEEKS...



IT'S A SOAP OPERA
FOR SOME PEOPLE,
BUT, *like*, WHAT IF
YOU COULD APPEAR
IN THE LAST EPI-
SODE? THEY WEREN'T
GETTING PAID TO
CRY...THEY WERE
PAYING HIM TO CRY.



WHAT
WAS
THAT?!

BUT NUMATA, THIS
ISN'T LIKE ONE OF
THOSE LIGHT NOVELS.
IT'S GOT NO PICTURES,
AND CONTAINS BIG
WORDS, SUCH AS--
MMPH!



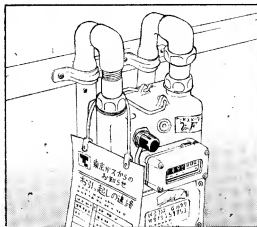
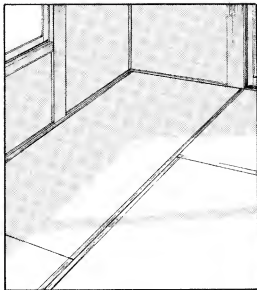
I DUNNO.

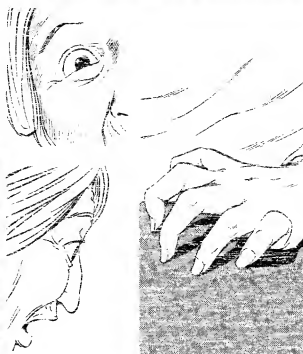
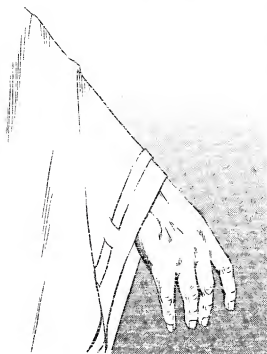
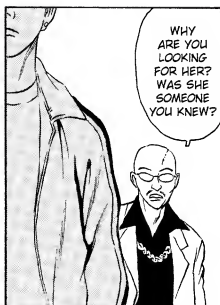
...I THINK
HE MEANS
"PHILISTINE."
WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THAT OLD
WOMAN,
ANYWAY?

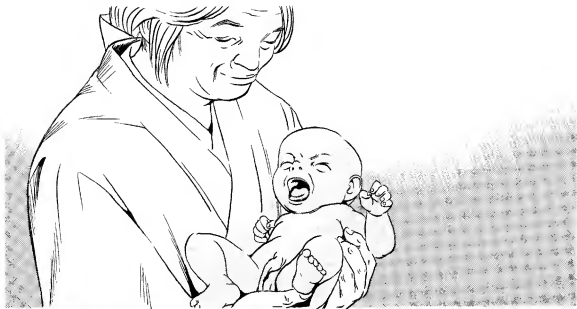


DUDES LIKE
YOU, YATA,
YOUR READING
HABITS GOT
NO SOUL!
WITHOUT SOME
LITERATURE IN
YOUR LIFE,
YOU'LL NEVER
BE ANYTHING
BUT PHILLY
CHEESE!

DON'T PUT ME
DOWN! THANKS
TO SELF-
IMPROVEMENT
BOOKS, WE WERE
ABLE TO CLEAR
THAT MOTHER'S
NAME--NOT TO
MENTION A LITTLE
PROFIT FOR A
CHANGE!



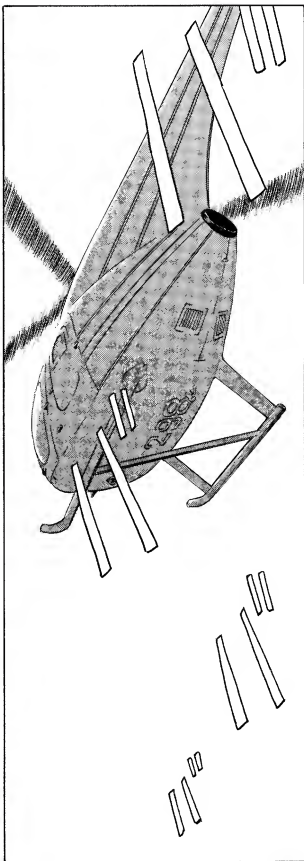
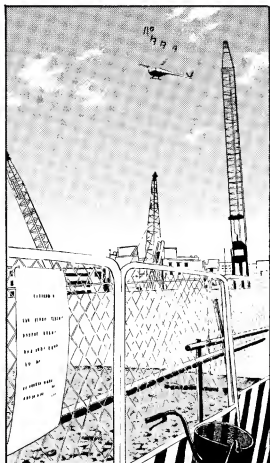


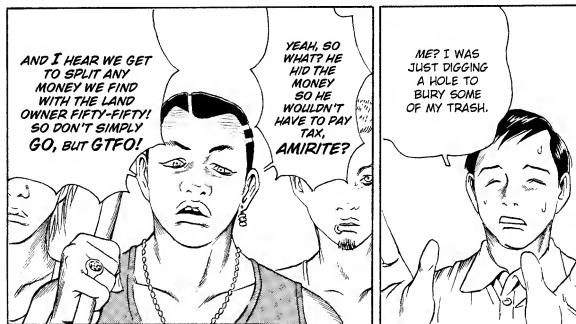
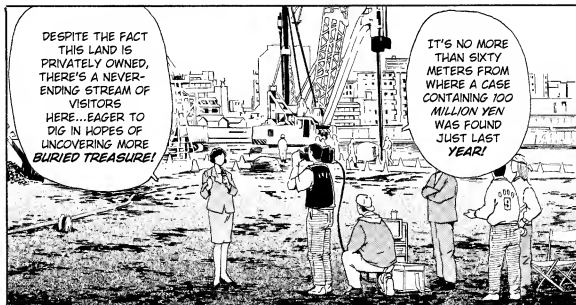


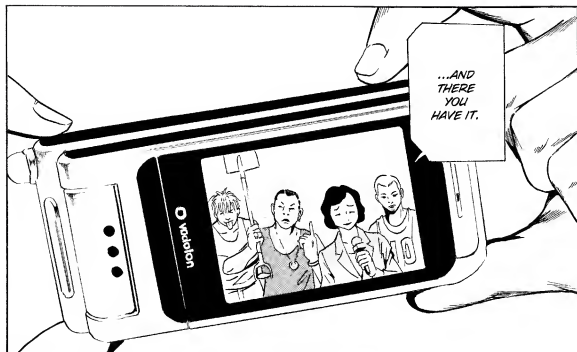


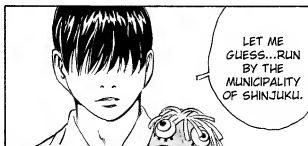
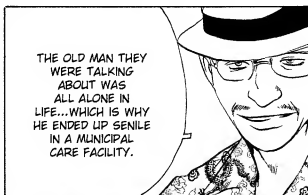
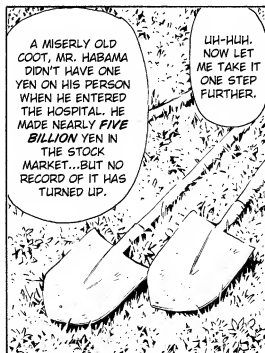
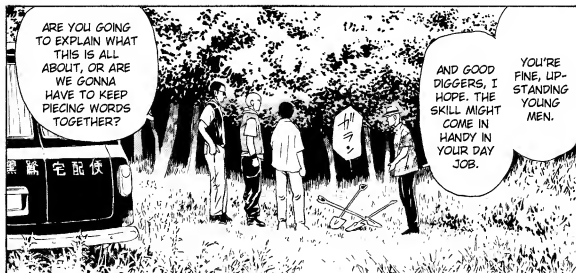
preparing for a journey

旅支度



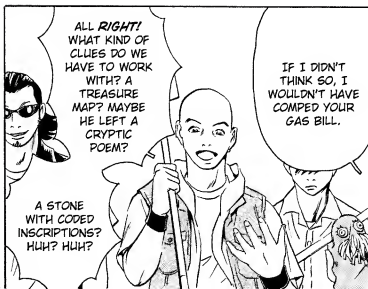








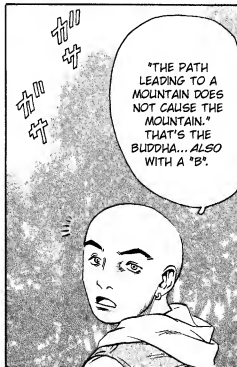
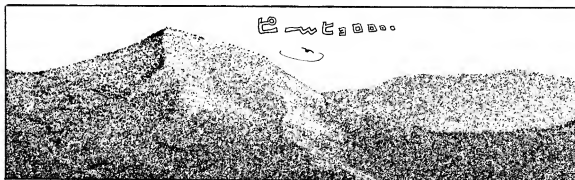
...SOMEWHERE
ON THIS
MOUNTAIN.



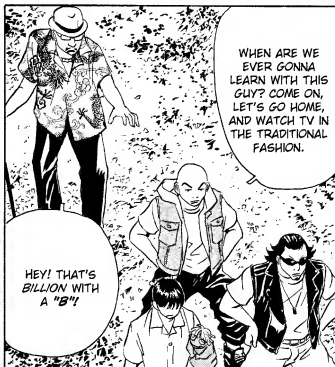
ALL RIGHT!
WHAT KIND OF
CLUES DO WE
HAVE TO WORK
WITH? A
TREASURE
MAP? MAYBE
HE LEFT A
CRYPTIC
POEM?

IF I DIDN'T
THINK SO, I
WOULDN'T HAVE
COMPED YOUR
GAS BILL.

A STONE
WITH CODED
INSCRIPTIONS?
HUH? HUH?

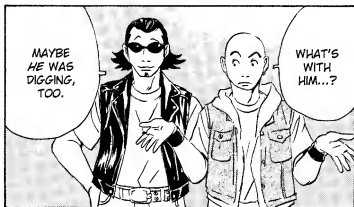
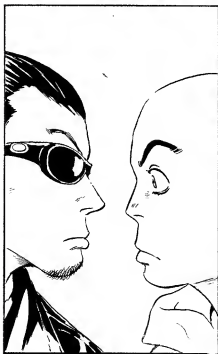
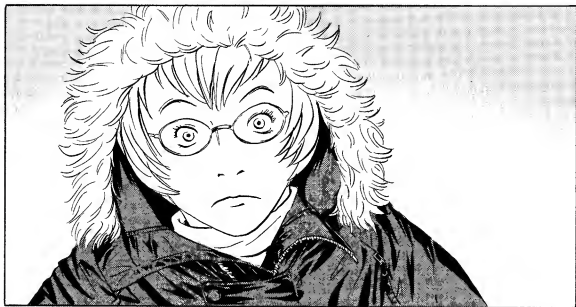


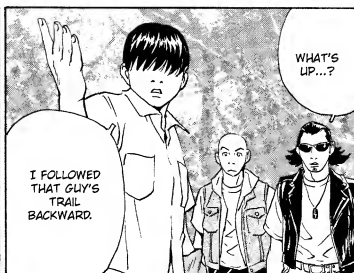
"THE PATH
LEADING TO A
MOUNTAIN DOES
NOT CAUSE THE
MOUNTAIN."
THAT'S THE
BUDDHA... ALSO
WITH A "B".

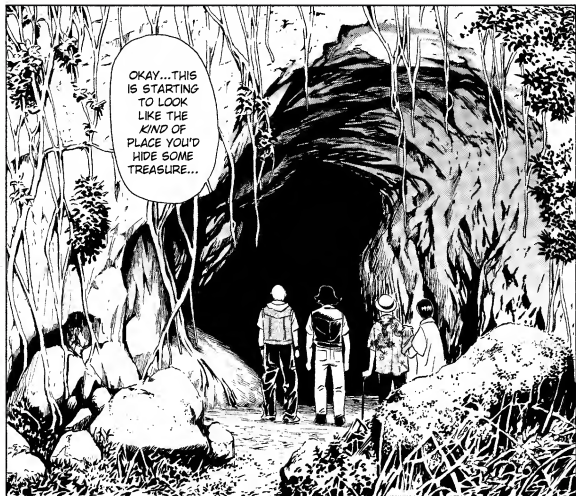


WHEN ARE WE
EVER GONNA
LEARN WITH THIS
GUY? COME ON,
LET'S GO HOME,
AND WATCH TV IN
THE TRADITIONAL
FASHION.

HEY! THAT'S
BILLION WITH
A "B"!





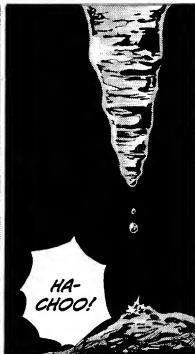


OKAY...THIS
IS STARTING
TO LOOK
LIKE THE
KIND OF
PLACE YOU'D
HIDE SOME
TREASURE...

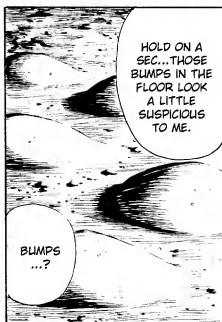


DAMN, IT'S
COLD IN HERE.
NO WONDER
THAT
DUDE WAS
BLUNDLED UP.

WELL, A LOT
OF CAVES KEEP
A CONSTANT
TEMPERATURE,
NO MATTER
WHAT THE
SEASON.



HA-
CHOO!





--A
HUMAN
HEAD
!!!



IT'S FREEZING,
EVEN THROUGH
MY GLOVES...
HEAVY, TOO.

WE FOUND
SOME MORE
OVER
HERE...

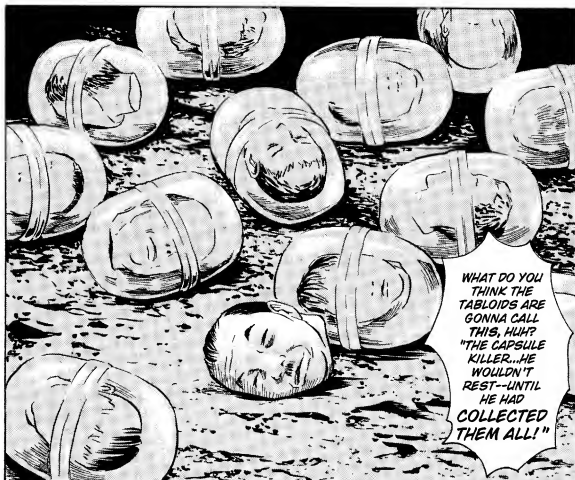
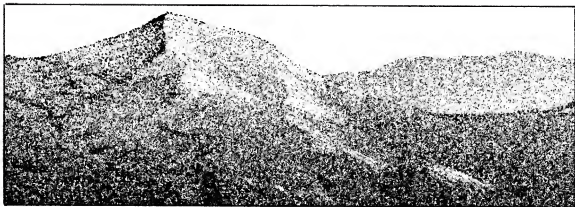
IS IT
CASH?!
GOLD?!



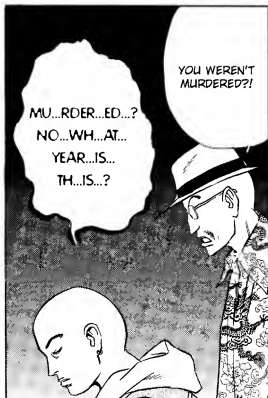
NO, WAIT.
IT'S--



EEEE YAAAAA

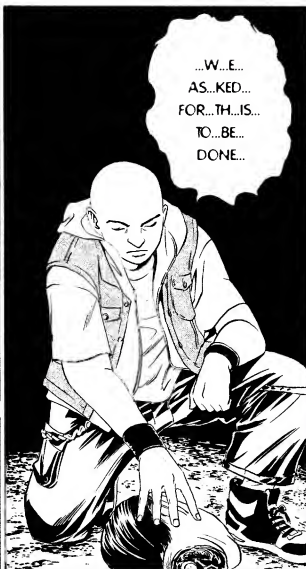






MU...RDER...ED...?
NO...WH...AT...
YEAR...IS...
TH...IS...?

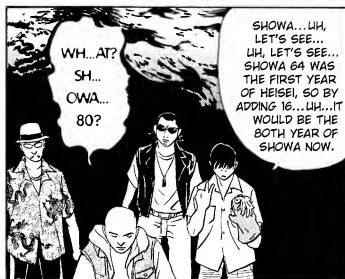
YOU WEREN'T
MURDERED?!



...W...E...
AS...KED...
FOR...TH...IS...
TO...BE...
DONE...



...IT'S THE
17TH YEAR
OF HEISEI.



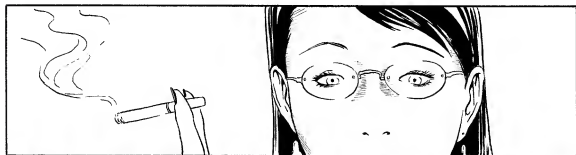
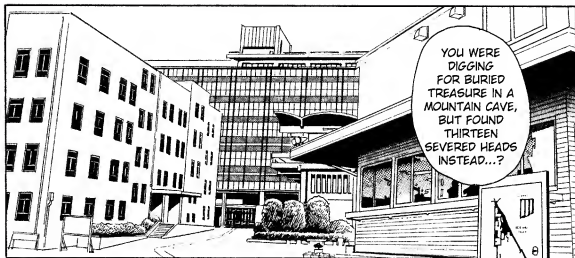
WH...AT?
SH...
OWA...
80?

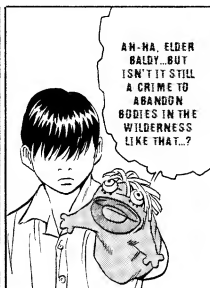
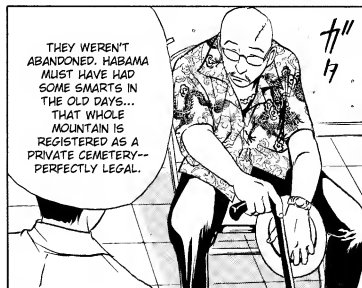
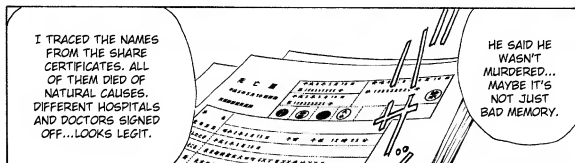
SHOWA...UH,
LET'S SEE...
UH, LET'S SEE...
SHOWA 64 WAS
THE FIRST YEAR
OF HEISEI, SO BY
ADDING 16...UH...IT
WOULD BE THE
BOTH YEAR OF
SHOWA NOW.

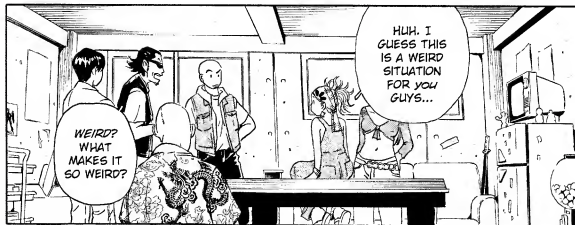
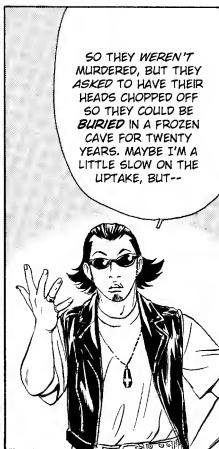
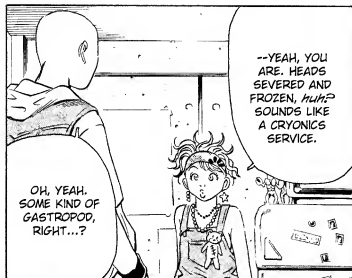


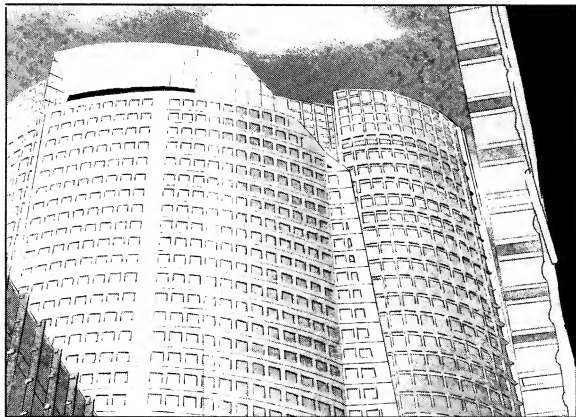
...HEI...SEI...?
WH...AT...?
I...AM...
FR...OM...
SHO...WA...



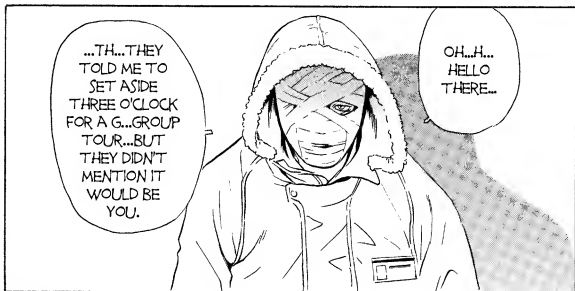




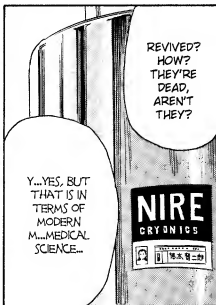
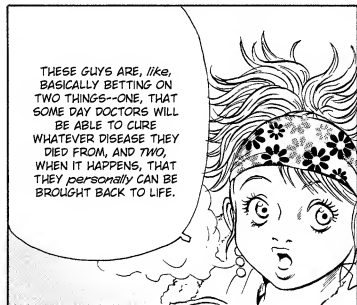
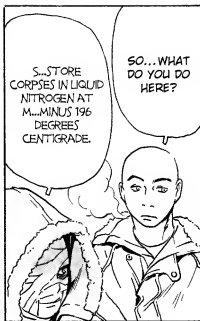
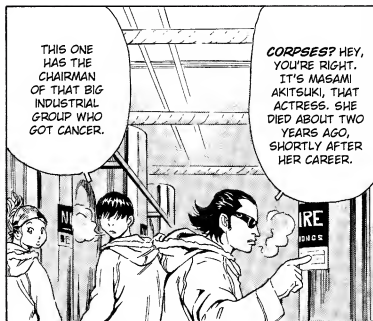




NIRE CRYONICS







N...NOT
NECESSARILY...WE
OFFER A SERVICE
WHERE ONLY THE
BRAIN IS PRESERVED...
IT'S CHEAPER...AND
THE ASSUMPTION IS
FUTURE MEDICINE WILL
BE ABLE TO CLONE A
NEW B...BODY...

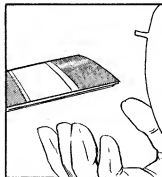


LITTLE
CHANCE?
WE'RE TALKING
ABOUT
SEVERED
HEADS HERE.
IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE,
RIGHT?

H...HOWEVER,
THE HEADS YOU
DISCOVERED HAVE
HAD DAMAGE TO
THE CRANIAL
NERVES...AND
HAVE LITTLE
CHANCE OF BEING
R...REVIVED.

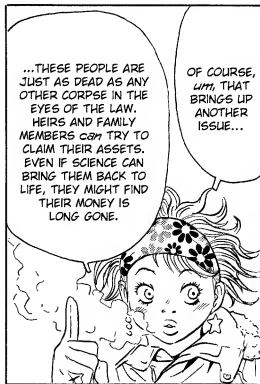


OF C...OURSE...THE
ANCIENT EGYPTIANS
BELIEVED THE BRAIN
PLAYED NO PART IN
IDENTITY...WHICH IS
WHY THEY REMOVED
IT...H...HA HA...



...THESE PEOPLE ARE
JUST AS DEAD AS ANY
OTHER CORPSE IN THE
EYES OF THE LAW.
HEIRS AND FAMILY
MEMBERS CAN TRY TO
CLAIM THEIR ASSETS.
EVEN IF SCIENCE CAN
BRING THEM BACK TO
LIFE, THEY MIGHT FIND
THEIR MONEY IS
LONG GONE.

OF COURSE,
LITT, THAT
BRINGS UP
ANOTHER
ISSUE...



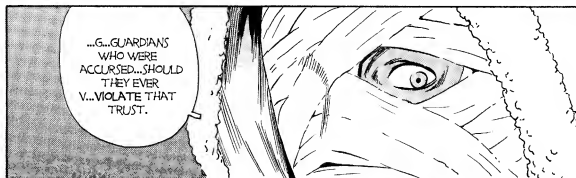
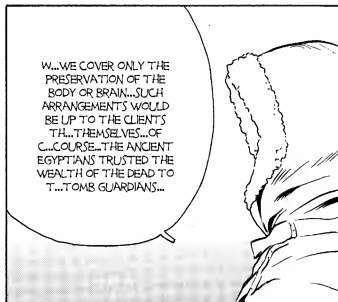
W...WELL...FOR
THAT MONEY
THERE IS THE
CHANCE YOU
MAY ONE DAY
COME BACK
FROM THE
D...DEAD.



...YOW!
AND THE
SERVICE
COSTS
200
MILLION
YEN?!

SOUNDS
LIKE QUITE
A GAMBLE,
IF YOU ASK
ME...





NEW!!!

**THE PRESENT
GOT YOU ILL?
THEN COLD CHILL**

WITH HABAMA CRYONIC SOLUTIONS!!

**HOT. RECKLESS.
TOTALLY INSANE.**

EXPERTS PREDICT FOR THE FUTURE

1997: Manhattan is maximum-security prison

2019: A new life awaits you in the off-world colonies

2052: One billionth Betamax sold

**"HOT" is a term of art meaning "gnarly," and should not be here interpreted as to refer to an elevated temperature. Clients are stored at a temperature of -196° C. Quality tested by Habama VP Tosuke Himuro!

HABAMA CORPORATION

TEL 03-0X-X-22XX

LOOK...

**THE PRESENT
GOT YOU ILL?
THEN COLD CHILL**

WITH HABAMA CRYONIC SOLUTIONS!!

**HOT. RECKLESS.
TOTALLY INSANE.**

EXPERTS PREDICT FOR THE FUTURE

1997: Manhattan is maximum-security prison

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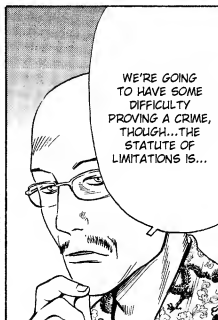
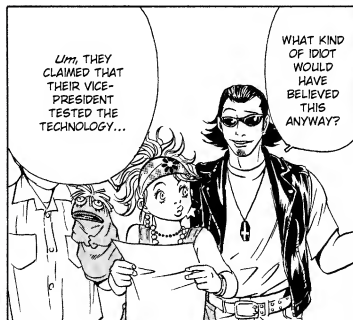
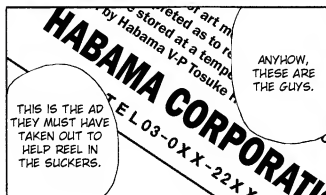
2052: One billionth Betamax sold

**"HOT" is a term of art meaning "gnarly," and should not be here interpreted as to refer to an elevated temperature. Clients are stored at a temperature of -196° C. Quality tested by Habama VP Tosuke Himuro!

HABAMA CORPORATION

TEL 03-0X-X-22XX

...THIS IS FROM THE 1980s.



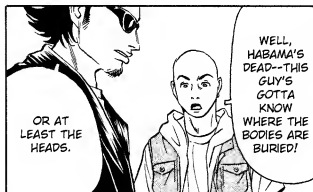


BUT THAT'S
GOTTA BE A
LIE, TOO. YOU
SAID THAT
EVEN TODAY,
NO ONE KNOWS
HOW TO REVIVE
PEOPLE YET!

...YOU
DON'T
THINK HE
WAS THAT
SAME GUY
WHO...

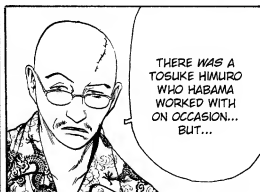
THAT'S
THEIR VICE-
PRESIDENT...
TOSUKE
HIMURO...?

Still fresh after six months!!

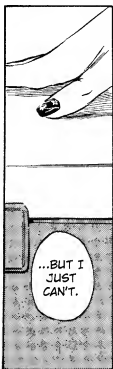


OR AT
LEAST THE
HEADS.

WELL,
HABAMA'S
DEAD--THIS
GUY'S
GOTTA
KNOW
WHERE THE
BODIES ARE
BURIED!



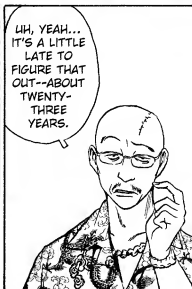
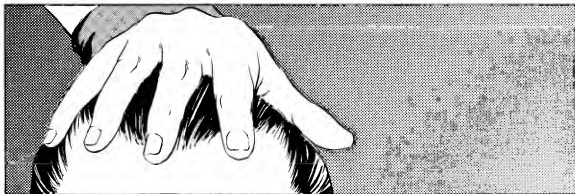
THERE WAS A
TOSUKE HIMURO
WHO HABAMA
WORKED WITH
ON OCCASION...
BUT...



...BUT I
JUST
CAN'T.



I WISH I
COULD SAY
THAT WAS A
METAPHOR
...



DE...LIVER...
ME...THE...
N...TA...KE...
ME...TO...TO...
SUKE...HI...
MURO.

YEAH. OUR
JOB IS TO
DELIVER
BODIES
WHEREVER
THEY WANT
TO GO.

...BUT
WE'RE NOT
EXACTLY DEBT
COLLECTORS.
WE'VE GOT
PLENTY OF
DEBT ON
OUR OWN.

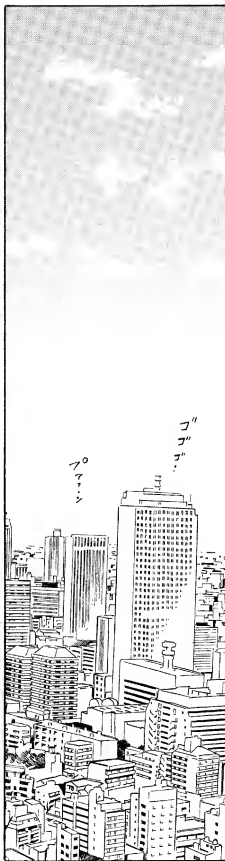
...I...CA...N...
PA...Y...YOU.

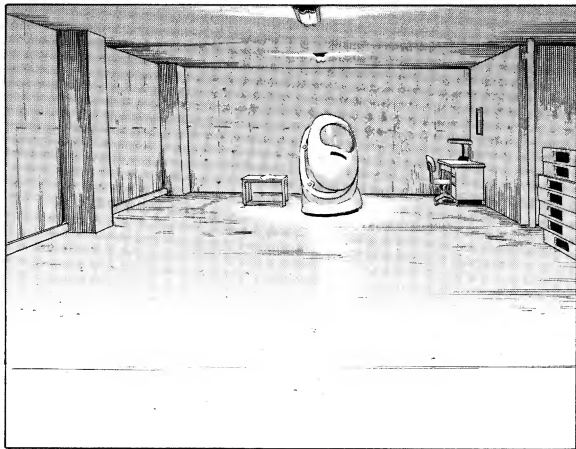
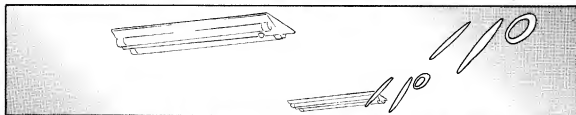
JU...ST...IN...
CAS...E...I...KE...
PT...SOM...E...
FUN...DS...ON...
ME...

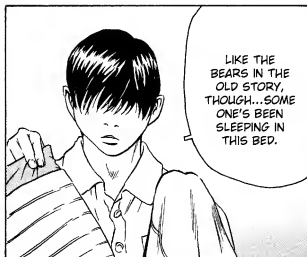
HOW?!

KEPT?

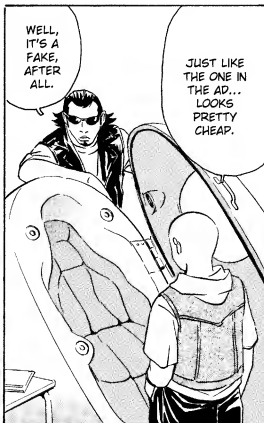








LIKE THE BEARS IN THE OLD STORY, THOUGH...SOME ONE'S BEEN SLEEPING IN THIS BED.



WELL, IT'S A FAKE, AFTER ALL.

JUST LIKE THE ONE IN THE AD... LOOKS PRETTY CHEAP.



I FOUND SOME OF YOUR PRIMITIVE PAPER MONEY INSIDE.

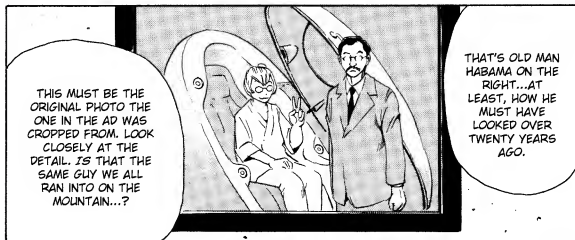


HEY, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

IT'S AN OLD BANKNOTE FROM THE SHOWA ERA...

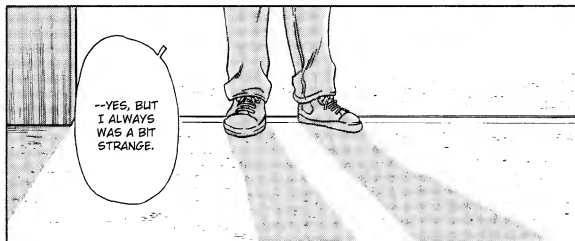
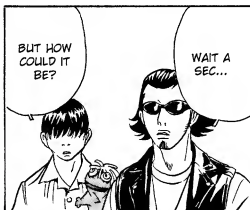
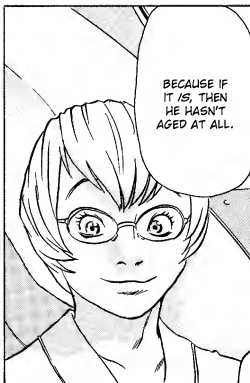
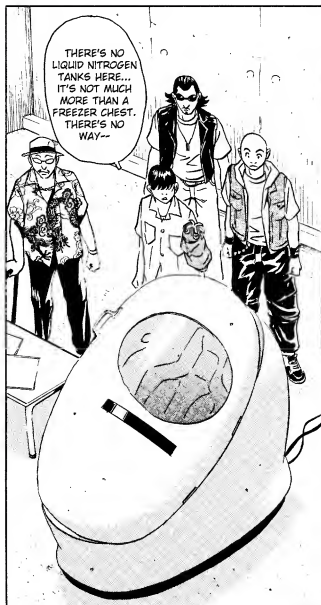
IS THIS REAL?

Who's this dude?



THIS MUST BE THE ORIGINAL PHOTO THE ONE IN THE AD WAS CROPPED FROM. LOOK CLOSELY AT THE DETAIL. IS THAT THE SAME GUY WE ALL RAN INTO ON THE MOUNTAIN...?

THAT'S OLD MAN HABAMA ON THE RIGHT...AT LEAST, HOW HE MUST HAVE LOOKED OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO.



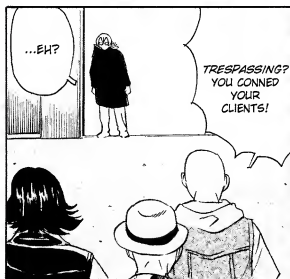


TRY
TWENTY-
THREE YEARS,
NUMATA...IF
THIS WEIRDO'S
TELLING THE
TRUTH.

Y-YOU'RE
**BULLSHIT-
TING!** YOU
SPENT **SIX
MONTHS** IN
THAT THING?



WAIT, WAIT, WAIT,
GENTLEMEN. LET'S
START OVER
FROM THE PART
WHERE YOU'RE
TRESPASSING IN
MY OFFICE.



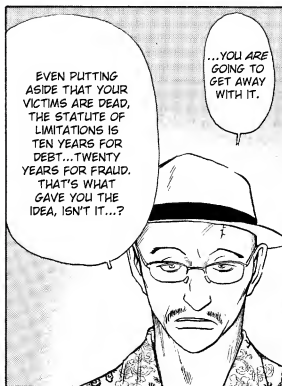
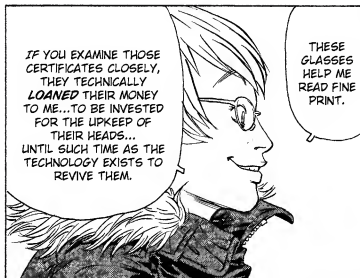
...EH?

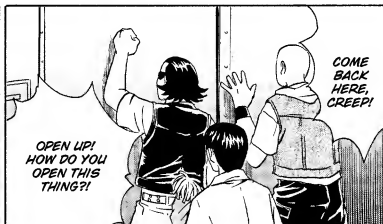
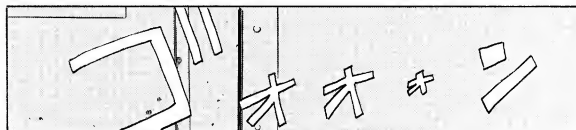
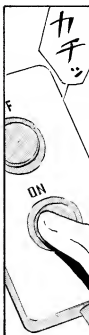
TRESPASSING?
YOU CONNED
YOUR
CLIENTS!

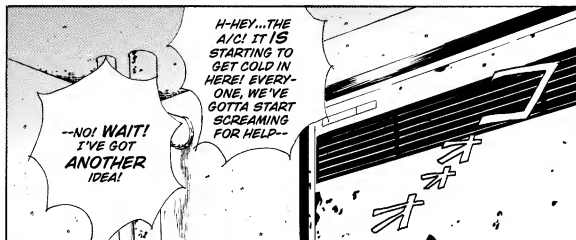
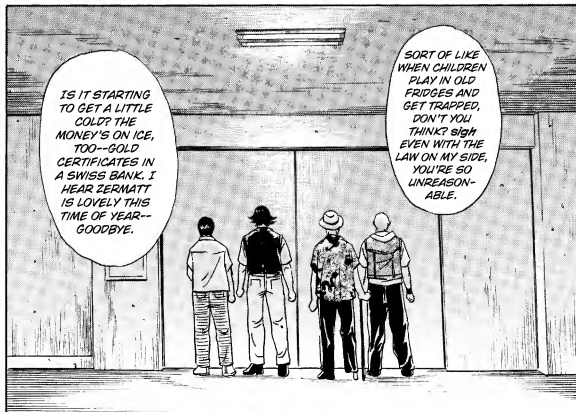


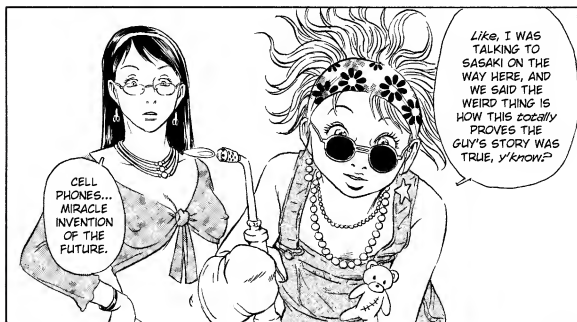
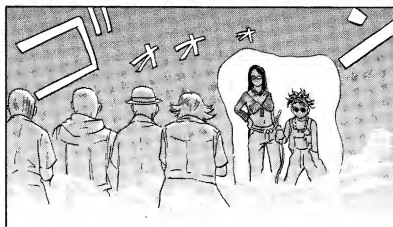
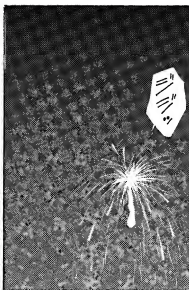
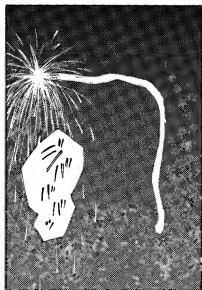
WHEN I WAS EIGHT
YEARS OLD,
THERE WAS A TIME I
FELL THROUGH THE
ICE WHILE PLAYING.
IT WAS FORTY
MINUTES BEFORE
THE AMBULANCE GOT
THERE. BUT I WOKE
UP IN THE HOSPITAL
FRESH AS A DAISY.
THEY WROTE UP THE
CASE IN ALL THE
JOURNALS.

IT'S MY METABOLISM,
YOU SEE. A BEAVER
CAN SURVIVE FOR SIX
MONTHS UNDER ICE.
IT TURNED OUT THAT
WAS NO GREAT TRICK
FOR ME, EITHER...
ALTHOUGH I NEVER
EXPLICITLY CLAIMED
IT WOULD WORK
FOR OTHERS.

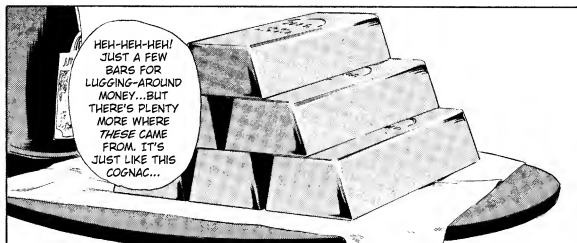


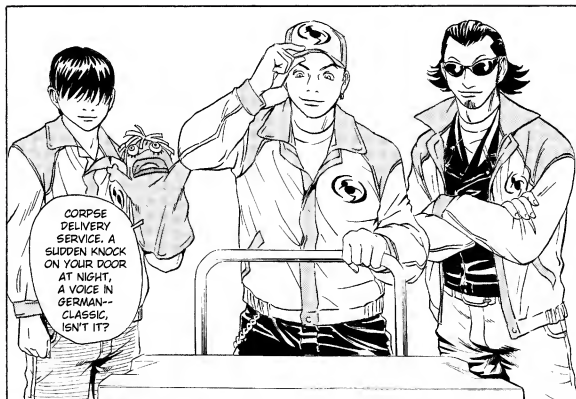


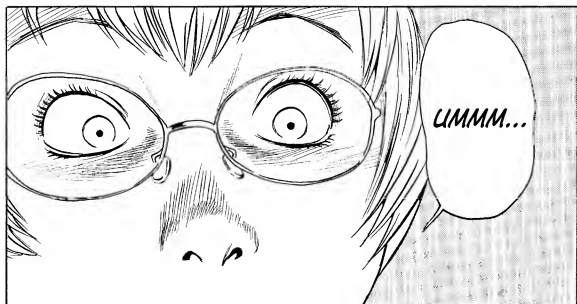






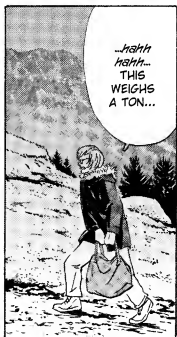


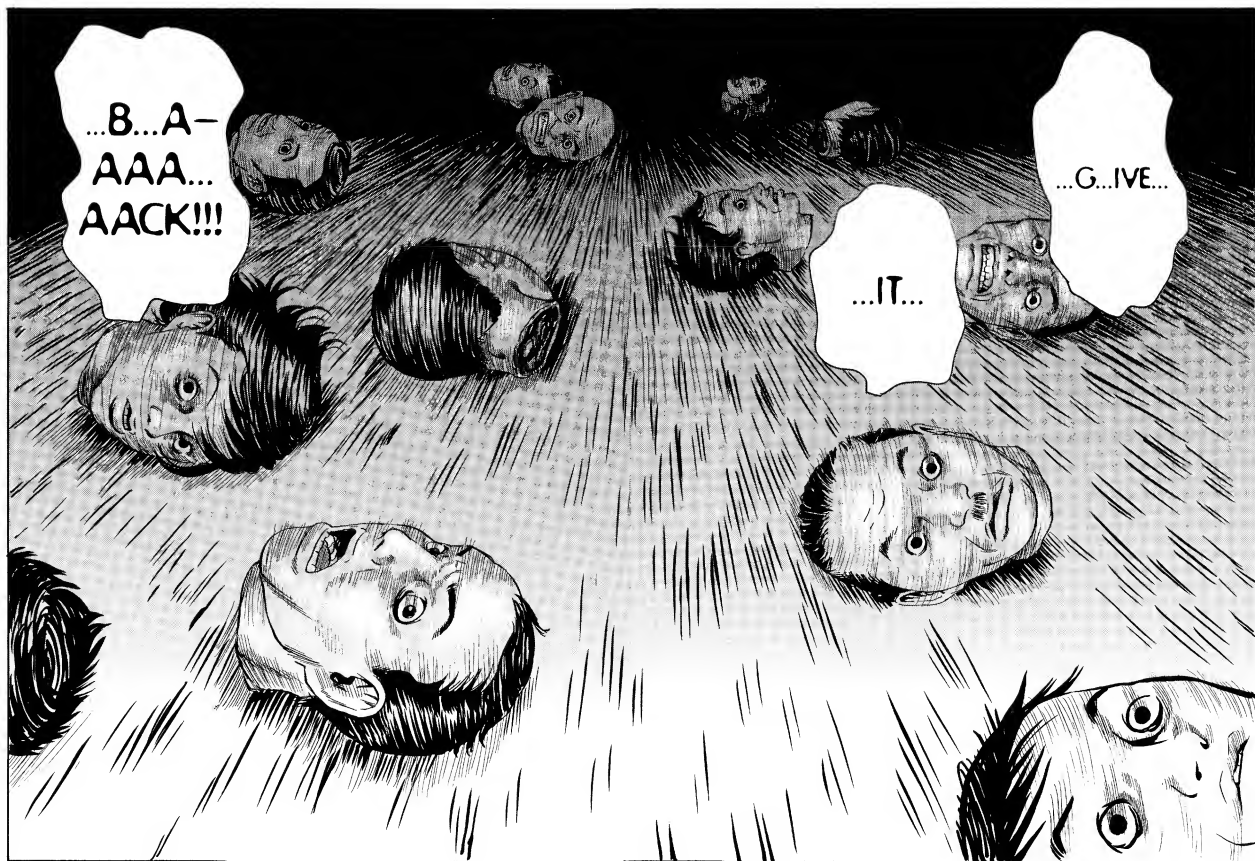


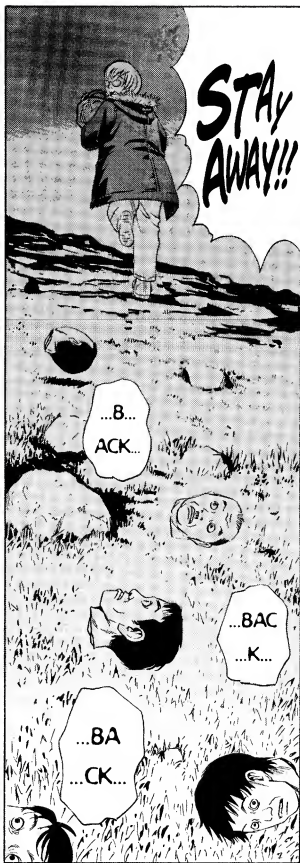




COME
BACK
HERE!
QUIT
TRYING
TO
ESCAPE
JUSTICE!









WELL, THERE GOES HIMURO INTO THE ICE...HIS GOLD...AND OUR CLIENTS.

AFTER EXPENSES, WE'VE STILL GOT A TOOTH OR TWO. COOL.



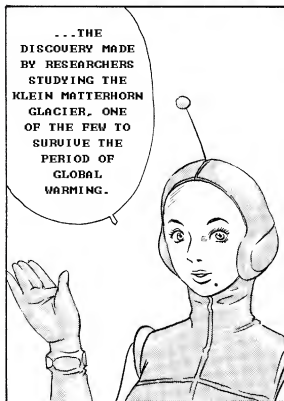
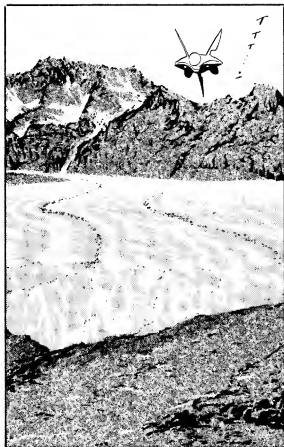
WE WENT THE DISTANCE, RIGHT? I MEAN, NOBODY CAN SAY WE DIDN'T TRY.

NOPE. LET'S GO GRAB SOME FONDUE.

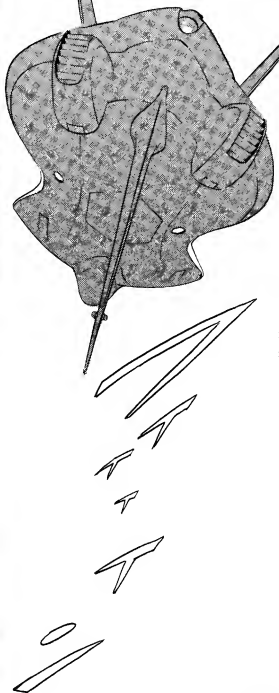


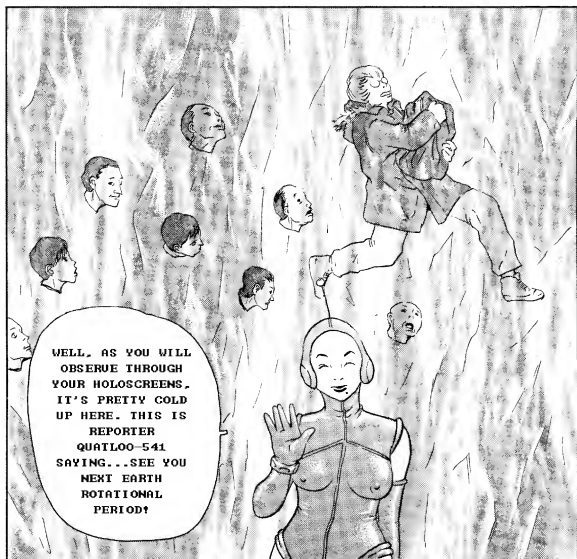
I MEAN, C'MON. THE ONLY THING MISSING WAS THE CHICKS IN THE SKINTIGHT BODYSUITS.

...SPEAKING OF WHICH, REMEMBER ALL THOSE CHEESY PREDICTIONS HE MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE?



2491 A.D.





the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

黒鷲死体宅配便

eiji otsuka 大塚英志 housui yamazaki 山崎峰水

designer **HEIDI FAINZA**

editorial assistant **RACHEL MILLER**

art director **LIA RIBACCHI**

publisher **MIKE RICHARDSON**

English-language version

produced by Dark Horse Comics

THE KUROSAKI CORPSE DELIVERY SERVICE VOL. 5

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DISJECTA MEMBRA

SOUND FX GLOSSARY AND NOTES ON *KUROSAGI* VOL. 5 BY TOSHIFUMI YOSHIDA

introduction and additional comments by the editor

TO INCREASE YOUR ENJOYMENT of the distinctive Japanese visual style of this manga, we've included a guide to the sound effects (or "FX") used in this manga. It is suggested the reader *not* constantly consult this glossary as they read through, but regard it as supplemental information, in the manner of footnotes. If you want to imagine it being read aloud by Osaka, after the manner of her lecture to Sakaki on hemorrhoids in episode five, please go right ahead. In either Yuki Matsuoka or Kira Vincent-Davis's voice—I like them both.

Japanese, like English, did not independently invent its own writing system, but instead borrowed and modified the system used by the then-dominant cultural power in their part of the world. We still call the letters we use to write English today the "Roman" alphabet, for the simple reason that about 1600 years ago the earliest English speakers, living on the frontier of the Roman Empire, began to use the same letters the Romans used to write their Latin language to write out English.

Around that very same time, on the other side of the planet, Japan, like England, was another example of an island civilization lying across the sea from a great empire, in this case, that of China. Likewise the Japanese borrowed from the Chinese writing system, which then as now consists of thousands of complex symbols—today in China officially referred

to in the Roman alphabet as *hanzi*, but which the Japanese pronounce as *kanji*. For example, all the Japanese characters you see on the front cover of *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*—the seven which make up the original title and the four each which make up the creators' names—are examples of kanji. Of course, all of them were hanzi first; although the Japanese did invent some original kanji of their own, just as new hanzi have been created over the centuries as Chinese evolved.

Note that whereas both *kanji* and *hanzi* are methods of writing foreign words in Roman letters, "kanji" gives English-speakers a fairly good idea of how the Japanese word is really pronounced—*khan-gee*—whereas "hanzi" does not—in Mandarin Chinese it sounds something like *n-tsu**h*. The reason is fairly simple: whereas the most commonly used method of writing Japanese in Roman letters, called the Hepburn system, was developed by a native English speaker, the most commonly used method of writing Chinese in Roman letters, called the *Pinyin* system, was developed by native Mandarin speakers. In fact Pinyin was developed to help teach Mandarin pronunciation to speakers of other Chinese dialects; unlike Hepburn, it was not intended as a learning tool for English-speakers *per se*, and hence has no particular obligation to "make sense" to English speakers or, indeed, users of

other languages spelled with the Roman alphabet.

Whereas the various dialects of Chinese are written entirely in hanzi, it is impractical to render the Japanese language entirely in them. To compare once more, English is a notoriously difficult language in which to spell properly, and this is in part because it uses an alphabet designed for another language, Latin, whose sounds are different. The challenges the Japanese faced in using the Chinese writing system for their own language were even greater, for whereas spoken English and Latin are at least from a common language family, spoken Japanese is unrelated to any of the various dialects of spoken Chinese. The complicated writing system Japanese evolved represents an adjustment to these differences.

When the Japanese borrowed hanzi to become kanji, what they were getting was a way to write out (remember, they already had ways to say) their vocabulary. Nouns, verbs, many adjectives, the names of places and people—that's what kanji are used for, the fundamental data of the written language. The practical use and processing of that "data"—its grammar and pronunciation—is another matter entirely. Because spoken Japanese neither sounds nor functions like Chinese, the first work-around tried was a system called *manyogana*, where individual kanji were picked to represent certain syllables in Japanese. A similar method is still used in Chinese today to spell out foreign names; companies and individuals often try to choose hanzi for this purpose that have an auspicious, or at least not insulting meaning. As you will also observe in *Kurosagi* and elsewhere,

the meaning behind the characters that make up a personal name are an important literary element of Japanese as well.

The commentary in *Katsuya Terada's The Monkey King* (also available from Dark Horse, and also translated by Toshifumi Yoshida) notes the importance that not only Chinese, but Indian culture had on Japan at this time in history—particularly, Buddhism. It is believed the Northeast Indian *Siddham* script studied by Kukai (died 835 AD), founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism, inspired him to create the solution for writing Japanese still used today. Kukai is credited with the idea of taking the manyogana and making shorthand versions of them now known simply as *kana*. The improvement in efficiency was dramatic—a kanji, used previously to represent a sound, that might have taken a dozen strokes to draw, was now reduced to three or four.

Unlike the original kanji it was based on, the new kana had *only* a sound meaning. And unlike the thousands of kanji, there are only 46 kana, which can be used to spell out any word in the Japanese language, including the many ordinarily written with kanji (Japanese keyboards work on this principle). The same set of 46 kana is written two different ways depending on their intended use: cursive style, *hiragana*, and block style, *katakana*. Naturally, sound FX in manga are almost always written out using kana.

Kana works somewhat differently than the Roman alphabet. For example, while there are separate kana for each of the five vowels (the Japanese order is not A-E-I-O-U as in English, but A-I-U-E-O), except for "n," there are no separate kana

for consonants (the middle “n” in the word *ninja* illustrates this exception). Instead, kana work by grouping together consonants with vowels: for example, there are five kana for sounds starting with “k,” depending on which vowel follows it—in Japanese vowel order, they go KA, KI, KU, KE, KO. The next set of kana begins with “s” sounds, so SA, SHI, SU, SE, SO, and so on. You will observe this kind of consonant-vowel pattern in the FX listings for *Kurosagi* Vol. 4 below.

Katakana are almost always the kind that get used for manga sound FX, but on occasion (often when the sound is one associated with a person’s body) hiragana are used instead. In *Kurosagi* Vol. 5 you can see one of several examples on 90.5, when Nishimura screams with a “WAAAAAA” sound, which in hiragana style is written わあああああ. Note its more cursive appearance compared to the other FX. If it had been written in katakana style, it would look like ファアアアア.

To see how to use this glossary, take an example from page 5: “5.2 FX: GO—foot-step.” 5.2 means the FX is the one on page 5, in panel 2. GO is the sound these kana—ゴツ—literally stand for. After the dash comes an explanation of what the sound represents (in some cases, it will be less obvious than others). Note that in cases where there are two or more different sounds in a single panel, an extra number is used to differentiate them from right to left; or, in cases where right and left are less clear, in clockwise order.

The use of kana in these FX also illustrates another aspect of written Japanese—its flexible reading order. For example, the way you’re reading the pages and panels of this book in general: going from right-to-

left, and from top to bottom—is similar to the order in which Japanese is also written in most forms of print: books, magazines, and newspapers. However, many of the FX in *Kurosagi* (and manga in general) read left-to-right. This kind of flexibility is also to be found on Japanese web pages, which usually also read left-to-right. In other words, Japanese doesn’t simply read “the other way” from English; the Japanese themselves are used to reading it in several different directions.

As might be expected, some FX “sound” short, and others “sound” long. Manga represent this in different ways. One of many instances of “short sounds” in *Kurosagi* Vol. 5 is to be found in the example from 5.2 given above: GO. Note the small ヲ mark it has at the end. This ordinarily represents the sound “tsu,” but its half-size use at the end of FX like this means the sound is the kind which stops or cuts off suddenly; that’s why the sound is written as GO and not GOTSU—you don’t “pronounce” the TSU in such cases. Note the small “tsu” has another occasional use *inside*, rather than at the end, of a particular FX, where it indicates a doubling of the consonant sound that follows it.

There are three different ways you may see “long sounds”—where a vowel sound is extended—written out as FX. One is with an ellipsis, as in 4.1’s SHIIIN. Another is with an extended line, as in 42.2’s GOOOO. Still another is by simply repeating a vowel several times, as in 176.5’s GOOOON. You will note that 42.2 has a “tsu” at its end, suggesting an elongated sound that’s suddenly cut off; the methods may be combined within a single FX. As a visual element in manga, FX are an art rather

than a science, and are used in a less rigorous fashion than kana are in standard written Japanese.

The explanation of what the sound represents may sometimes be surprising; but every culture “hears” sounds differently. Note that manga FX do not even necessarily represent literal sounds; for example 4.1 FX: SHIIIN—in manga this is the figurative “sound” of silence, in this case the silence of Yata’s joke bombing. Such “mimetic” words, which represent an imagined sound, or even a state of mind, are called *gitaigo* in Japanese. Like the onomatopoeic *giseigo* (the words used to represent literal sounds—i.e., most FX in this glossary are classed as *giseigo*), they are also used in colloquial speech and writing. A Japanese, for example, might say that something bounced by saying PURIN, or talk about eating by saying MUGU MUGU. It’s something like describing chatter in English by saying “yadda yadda yadda” instead.

One important last note: all these spelled-out kana vowels should be pronounced as they are in Japanese: “A” as *ah*, “I” as *eee*, “U” as *ooh*, “E” as *eh*, and “O” as *oh*.

2 As has been Eiji Otsuka’s style in *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*, the chapter titles here in Vol. 5 are again song names. For this volume, the songs are those of Kei Ogura. A singer, composer, and lyricist, Ogura was unusual in that he was a professional musician who nevertheless openly maintained his regular day job as a banker! Often characterized as a folk singer, he has branched out several times, working with people such as Hibari Misora, the most

famous postwar female *enka* singer (a style sometimes compared to American honky-tonk in theme, although the instrumentation is more Japanese), and balladeer Akira Fuse (whose songs were used for the opening and ending of the recent *Kamen Rider Hibiki* TV series). Ogura himself worked on the end credits for Noboru Ishiguro’s epic anime adaptation of the *Legend of the Galactic Heroes* novel series.

4.1 **FX: SHIIIN**—sound of silence

4.2 **FX: BA**—grabbing sound

5.2 **FX: GO**—footstep

6.1 **FX: YURARI YURA YURARI**—pendulum starting to swing

8 I just wanted to say that one of the things I’ve always loved best about manga is its chapter title pages, and especially the way they often relate to the story obliquely, or sometimes not at all. It’s a charming element not usually found in traditional American comics. I suppose that’s because with only 22 pages or so of art per month in an American comic, it’s felt every page is needed for storytelling; yet there are plenty of manga in Japanese monthly magazines with that kind of chapter length. It may be, rather, that the convention of manga title pages arose to make the transition between different stories all sharing the same magazine more clear.

10.4 **FX: JARA**—cuffs rattling

11.5 **FX: PA**—pulling up handkerchief
The traditional magician’s phrase, “hocus pocus,” is often said to be a corruption of *hoc est (enim) corpus (meum)*, “for this is my body,” a phrase

invoked during the Latin Rite of the Catholic Eucharist, so the joke seemed fairly obvious in this case. The original Japanese phrase spoken by Sasayama was “Arabiin . . . dobiin . . . Hagechabin!”—as *hage* means “bald,” it was possibly a self-referential joke on his part.

- 13.4 **FX: SU**—placing hand on body
- 15.2 **FX/balloons: GOTON GATA GAN**—car bouncing along a bumpy dirt road
- 16.3 **FX: CHAN CHAKA CHAKA CHAKA ZUN CHA CHA**—ringtone
- 17.2 That seems at first like a fairly shameless bit of product placement on Kadokawa’s part, but it won’t be the last reference to *Kurosagi*’s publisher in this volume—as you shall see.
- 19.1 **FX/balloon: BAN**—car door closing
- 20.4 **FX: ZAN**—slashing sound
- 22.2 **FX/balloon: FU**—sound of the *torii* gate passing by quickly

The name of the town in the original Japanese version was *Osugita*, spelled with the kanji 大杉田 (you can clearly see them on Sasaki’s computer screen in 17.3). The homophonic *osugita*, spelled 多すぎた, means “too many.” I feel somewhat guilty that *Tumani* is not an actual Japanese word, although it theoretically could be one under the Japanese Ministry of Education’s own romanization system, the *kunrei-shiki*. Under the better-known (to foreigners) Hepburn system discussed in the intro, it would be

tsumani—which isn’t a real Japanese word either, although people sometimes misspell *tsunami* that way.

- 22.4 **FX/balloon: CHIRA**—peering into mirror
- 23.6 **FX/balloons: CHUN CHUN CHUCHUN**—sound of chirping birds
- 26.1 **FX/balloon: GAPO**—pulling a cooking pot out of the mud
- 26.4 **FX: CHARAN**—sound of chain dangling
- 26.5 **FX: HYUN HYUN HYUN**—sound of swinging pendulum
- 29.4 In this case, the “alkaline conditions” giving rise to saponification within American caskets would come from the use of embalming fluid.
- 30.6 **FX: DOSA**—dropping body bag
- 31.2 **FX: SU**—placing hand on body
- 32.5 **FX: ZAAA**—sound of rain
- 32.6 **FX: OGYAA OGYAA**—sound of a crying baby
- 33.5 **FX/balloon: BOKO**—sound of something coming out of the mud
- 34-35.1 **FX: BOKO BOKO**—sound of dried mud breaking up
- 34-35.2 **FX: KUN KUKUN**—sound of exposed leg moving back and forth
- 34-35.3 **FX: BATAN BATAN**—sound of torso flopping back and forth
- 36.1 **FX: BOKO BOKON**—another body coming out of mud
- 36.2 **FX: ZU**—starting to pull sword out of the mud
- 36.3 **FX: ZUZUZU**—continuing to pull the sword out of the mud

- 37.3 FX: HYUN HYUN**—swinging sword
- 39.2 FX: BYUN**—sound of something zipping by head
- 39.3 FX: DOKO**—sound of spear hitting body
- 40.1 FX: DWOON**—thud
- 40.5 FX: PATA**—arm falling to the ground
- 41.1 FX: GORO GORORO**—sound of the sky rumbling
- 41.2 FX: POTSU POTSU**—sound of raindrops
- 41.3 FX: ZAAA**—sound of pouring rain
- 41.4** The editor was recently on a radio show for KQED discussing manga along with the much more resonantly-voiced (and cosmically better-informed) Fred Schodt, and was asked by the host whether he'd ever come across any mention of the Nanking massacre in a manga. I said no, but talked about how *Kurosagi* made reference to Unit 731 in Volume 4. Now, with this story, we do see the massacre (also known as the Rape of Nanking—the “rape” part having been quite literal as well) make an appearance. Although some fairly prominent Japanese figures have been known to assert this event never happened, or that it's used by the Chinese government to whip up a sense of nationalist hatred, the editor would say both are unfortunately true; that is, the Rape of Nanking did happen and was as horrible as they say, *and* it is used in a cynical fashion by the Chinese government that itself has a terrible human rights record towards its own

people. Japan has plenty to be proud of—its culture, its economic and technological achievements, the fact it is the most democratic nation in Asia. Nor need it be ashamed it was militarily defeated by the United States—it's not like they didn't put up a fight, after all; it took longer for America to beat Japan than Nazi Germany, and in the end atomic bombs were necessary to force an unconditional surrender—in a sense this terrible weapon was a measure of Japan's terrible will. But the imperialist and racist reasons behind the war itself were nothing for Japan to be proud of—not that they are the only nation that has a problem with misplaced pride.

- 42.2 FX: GOOOO**—sound of the incinerator
- 42.3 FX/balloon: KIN**—sound of the metal tip of the cane hitting floor
- 44.4 FX: ZAAAA**—sound of rain
- 44.6 FX: OGYAA OGYAA**—sound of a crying baby
- 45.2 FX: OGYAA OGYAA OGYAA OGYAA OGYAA**—crying baby sound
- 45.4 FX: OGYAA OGYAA**—crying baby
- 50.5 FX: HYUN HYUN HYUN**—pendulum swinging
- 54.3** It wouldn't be a real manga without an eating contest in there somewhere.
- 54.4 FX: GA GA GA**—fierce eating sounds
- 56.2 FX: GATAAN**—sound of Numata falling over

- 58.1** *Maitreyavyakarana* is the ancient Sanskrit text that prophesied the coming of a future incarnation of the Buddha, known as Maitreya (or Miroku in Japanese). As a sort of messianic figure within Buddhism, there have been many claimants to the role over the centuries, and Maitreya has inspired apocalyptic and revolutionary movements, particularly in China. Numata must have been under great duress indeed to actually remember anything from his classes.
- 60.2** The kanji in Shinjue's name are 死戸, meaning "death" and "door." Not at all foreboding.
- 61.4** **FX: PON**—tossing crumpled check
- 63.1** The editor has often thought that we're being remiss to archaeologists of the future by our rather minimalist burial practices. How are generations to come supposed to learn anything about us, if we leave ourselves in just a simple box with no possessions hoarded for the afterlife? Not to mention our modern lack of tombs that throw in a few challenges, like pit traps and spring-loaded spears.
- 64.2** **FX: CHARAAN JARARARAN JAKA JAN**—ringtone
- 64.3** **FX: PI**—answering phone
- 66.3** **FX: BASA**—x-ray pictures being tossed onto the table
- 67.3** **FX: SU**—reaching out to touch
FX: GACHA—opening door
- 73.2** That's how it was done. Although we have an image of a human brain as a rubbery organ, the ones you might see in anatomy classes were specially treated to acquire a firm consistency; fresh human brains have a texture more like scrambled eggs. A not dissimilar procedure is used in a trans-orbital lobotomy, although the goal there is to damage brain tissue rather than remove it. Well, this is a horror manga.
- 75.1** Yoshimune Tokugawa was the eighth of the Tokugawa shoguns, reigning from 1716 to 1745. He was known in particular for reforming the finances of the shogunate, a task which was largely ideological, since the Confucian principles that were used to help justify political obedience in the samurai era also contained a disdain for money and trade.
- 75.3** I regret to say the stuff about eating mummies is true as well.
- 75.5** **FX: SU**—sliding out x-ray
- 76.1** The organs that were removed included the lungs, liver, stomach, and intestines, and (at least in traditional practice) were not discarded like the brain, but were placed in the tomb within so-called *canopic jars* decorated with the likenesses of the sons of the god Horus, whose indestructible eye (portrayed on the cover of Vol. 5) was regarded as a talisman of rebirth. The canopic jars themselves can be seen in 74.4; note that if the cover design suggests that the brain, like the lungs, would be within such a "pot," (i.e., canopic jar), it would be inaccurate.

76.4 **FX: SU**—picking up tool

76.5 **FX: TORO**—pouring viscous fluid sound

76.6 **FX: BERI**—ripping up bandages

76.7 **FX: BERI BERI BERI**—sound of bandages being ripped up

78.6 **FX: NU**—blade being presented

79.2 **FX: SUCHA**—brandishing blade

87.1 **FX: GACHI GACHI GACHI**—mouth moving

87.3 **FX: DO**—mummy falling over

87.4 **FX: MOZO MOZO**—mummy wiggling closer

89.1 **FX: DON**—bumping into a sarcophagus

89.2 **FX: GURA**—sarcophagus starting to topple

89.3 **FX: DOKA GON DOKO**—sarcophagi hitting floor

90.1 **FX: ZU ZU**—mummy moving

90.2.1 **FX: GATA**—mummy moving to get free

90.2.2 **FX: GATA**—mummy moving to get free

90.2.3 **FX: GATA**—mummy moving to get free

90.3 **FX: YURARI**—another mummy slowly getting up

90.5 **FX: WAAAAAAAAAAAA**—scream of fear

92.2 **FX: SU**—placing a scroll into a coffin

92.4 **FX: GARARARARA**—sound of wheels rolling

94.1 **FX: GAKU**—pratfall sound

94.2 **FX: PARARI**—bandage starting to unravel

94.5 **FX: MOZO GOSO**—putting bandage back on

95.2.1 **FX/balloon: PATAN**—closing door

95.2.2 **FX/balloon: KACHA**—locking door

99.3 The author of this book is believed to be a riff on Takafumi Horie, formerly a dot-com billionaire (his assets are now said to be considerably reduced, although still considerable) through his founding of Livedoor, an internet portal. He was later investigated for securities fraud and sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment in March of this year—although some commentators have charged an establishment bias against Horie for his younger, non-conformist, and entrepreneurial business style, seen as disruptive to the established order.

104.4 This is an excerpt (apparently being chanted by the priest sitting before the altar) of the opening passage of the *Hannya Shingyo*, the Heart of Wisdom Sutra, commonly read at Buddhist funerals in Japan. Going from right to left, the first line is said *Hannya Haramita Ji*, the second line *Sho Ken Go Un Kai Ku*, and the third line *Do Issai Ku Yaku*. One translation of the complete passage (there are a few words missing from the beginning and ending of what is given here) is, "When a sincere truth seeker finds the wisdom of enlightenment, he realizes that the five senses are empty, and he tran-

scends every suffering." Note that the Hannya Shingyo, admired for its brief but resonant expression of essential Buddhist beliefs, is not a funeral service per se; in a manner comparable to the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm in Christianity, it is said at regular devotions (particularly in Zen practice) as well as for the dead.

107.5 FX: BURORORO—bus driving away

110.4 It's moments like these that assuage the bitter sting of *Welcome to the N.H.K.* not being a Dark Horse title.

113.4 FX: PA PA—shaking salt on Makino. Japanese (among other cultures) use salt for ritual purification after a funeral; readers may have noted its use also in Vol. 3 of Housui Yamazaki's other manga from Dark Horse, *Mail*.

114.5 FX: PIKO PIKO PIKO—hitting Numata with toy magical girl wand

115.1 FX: JAN JYAKA JAJAN JAAN—ringtone

116.1 The sign says "Kusaha Ceremony," which will immediately put the reader in mind of "Nire Ceremony." In real-life Japan, it is common for funeral homes to use the English loan-word *seremonii* in their company names, signifying their readiness to perform the ceremonies of various different religious rites.

116.3 FX: KACHA—door opening

117.2.1 FX/black: KA—footstep

117.2.2 FX/white: KIN—sound of the metal tip on cane hitting floor

117.3 Although funerals in Japan are usually held with Buddhist rites, a few are conducted with Shinto rites (in fact a major reason so many Japanese funerals are Buddhist is so as to avoid spiritual "pollution" of Shinto rites through the presence of death). A Shinto altar, or *kamidana* (meaning "shelf for the gods") can be seen at the front of the room on 116.4.

122.1 FX/balloon: ZUZURI—sipping tea

122.3 The typical practice in a Japanese host or hostess club (of which today's maid cafes are only one modern incarnation) is that you pay one of the respective hosts or hostesses attached to the establishment 20 minutes at a time to sit with you at a table in a club, make conversation, and drink watered brandy (Michael Gombos maintains he's seen even the leftover watered brandy in the glasses poured back into the bottles from whence they came at closing time). It's just conversation, but if the client wants to try to convince the host/hostess to meet them after work, that's considered their business. At standard rates, you don't get to choose the specific person to sit with you; instead, as long as you keep paying, the old one will leave and a new one will arrive from a waiting room "backstage" such as Numata alludes to here. This system has its advantages for the host/hostess and client; if it's not going well for them, at least it will be over fairly soon. For extra money, of course, you can request

a specific person to sit with you, and some of a club's most popular "stars" can command high rates. But why am I explaining all this? You guys probably read *Ouran High School Host Club*.

124.6 FX/balloon: ZUZU—sipping tea

126 The sign reads "Funeral and wake site for the deceased, Yoshitaka Nonoguchi. Wake: March 12, 4pm on; Funeral: March 13, 1pm on." Note that Kadokawa's logo (the phoenix) is at the top of the sign!

127.3 Another excerpt from the Hannya Shingyo (see 104.4 above). Although partially obscured, the three lines of kanji in this passage read, going from right to left, *Ku Fu I Shiki, Shiki Soku Ze Ku, Ku Soku Ze Shiki*. One translation of this passage would be, "Emptiness is not different from all things; form is emptiness; emptiness is form."

128.3 FX: SU—old woman stepping forward

131.4 FX: GATAN BAKIN—sound of the coffin moving, then wood breaking

135.4 FX: PARA—book falling out

137.1 FX: PATAN—closing book

137.4 <http://www.angel-cp.com/>. Exclusively distributed in Japan through the Morinaga Milk Co., Ltd.—who are also makers of the world-famous non-dairy creamer, "Creap."

142.1 FX: BABABABA—helicopter sounds

142.2 FX: BATATATA—distant helicopter sounds

144.2 FX: CHICHI . . . CHICHI . . .
—chirping birds

145.1 FX/balloon: GARAN—shovels clattering on the ground

146.3 FX: PIIHYORO—sound of a bird

147.1 FX/balloon: ZA—footstep

147.3 FX/balloon: DADADA—running sound

147.4 The editor thought Himuro was a *she*, some kind of sinister riff on Rei Ayanami (of whom Natsuki Kato performed a truly spectacular cosplay in the September 18th issue of *Kurosagi's* home magazine, *Comic Charge*). But in a manga written by Eiji Otsuka, you never really know. Actually in manga you never really know, period.

150.4 FX: ZA ZA—digging sounds

150.5 *Gachapon* are the kind of capsules Japanese vending machine toys come in; their name is a perfect example of how sound effects make their way into everyday Japanese speech—GACHA being the mechanical sound of the vending machine knob being turned, and PON being the subsequent popping forth of the capsule.

151.4 FX: GASHAAAN—shattering sound

154.5 As noted before, for many business and official purposes, Japanese use not only the Western year, but the corresponding year of the imperial reign. The late Emperor Hirohito, whose era was known as *Showa* (posthumously, he too is known as the Showa Emperor) died in 1989, the 64th and final

year of Showa. The last year of the old era was also considered to be the first of the new—the *Heisei* era of the current Emperor, Akihito. This story takes place in 2005, but the current year is Heisei 17.

157.3 FX: BASA—tossing down a stack of paper

157.5 FX: GATA—sitting down into chair

160.3 FX: GOFWOO—sound of heavy doors opening

162.2 Cryonics services of the kind described here (preserving bodies and/or brains with liquid nitrogen or other techniques) actually exist, although no more than a few hundred people are known to have used them; the two main cryonics companies in the U.S. are the Cryonics Institute in Michigan, and the Alcor Life Extension Foundation in Arizona. Cryonics “patients” are, in fact, dead—under U.S. law, the procedure can only be applied after death (and would probably in any case kill a living person) and it should not be confused with the classic science fiction idea of “suspended animation,” since that usually implies a living person put into a state of long-term hibernation (something not yet possible under current medical science, just as the revival of cryonics patients is not yet possible). It should be noted that, at least in the United States, it is much cheaper to be cryonically preserved than the 200 million yen figure quoted here; Alcor, for example, charges

US\$150,000 for the whole body treatment—about 17 million yen at current rates. Presumably Nire’s unfortunate customers are having to pick up the tab for the firm’s prime downtown location.

164.1 FX: PARA—sound of a piece of paper being presented

165.1 As a child of the 1980s, I suppose I had better enjoy its current revival for however long it lasts. Well, these things do seem to go in cycles; the 1990s saw a lot of rediscovery of the ’70s, whereas the 1970s were known for the ’50s nostalgia of *Grease* and *Happy Days*. This, of course, leaves how the 1980s felt about the ’60s, an ambiguity reflected by the fact my high school had a themed dress-up called “Hippie/Bum Day.” Gen-X are the natural enemies of the Boomers, which is why I’m voting Obama.

166.2 The To in “Tosuke” is spelled using the character for “winter,” 冬, whereas the “Himuro” is composed of the characters for “ice” and room,” 氷室.

168.5 FX: NII—smirking sound

169.1 The editor’s mother came from a generation where it was considered prudent to always keep a little gold in your teeth; her reasoning was, “What if you need to bribe the camp guards”?

170.1 FX: GOGOGO PUWAAAAN—construction and traffic noise

171.2 FX: PA PA—lights coming on

172.4 The “dude” in question is Prince Shotoku (died 621 A.D.) who is

credited with establishing the first centralized government in Japan, and is therefore considered in some respects the founder of the Japanese nation. He was on the 10,000 yen banknote until 1986 (the current 10,000 yen note has Yukichi Fukuzawa, one of Japan's great modernizers in the 19th century).

- 176.2 FX: KACHI**—pushing button
- 176.3 FX: GOWUN GOWUN**—door closing
- 176.5 FX: GOOOON**—door closing
- 177.3 FX: KOOOOO**—sound of the AC starting up
- 178.2 FX/balloon: JIJI**—sound of sparks
- 178.3 FX: JIBABABAB**—sound of a cutting torch working
- 178.4 FX: GOWOOOON**—heavy door thudding
- 180.3 FX: KON KON**—knocking
- 180.4 FX: SASA**—hiding gold
- 180.5 *Leicheanlieferungsdienst*** is, as you might expect, a somewhat dubious way of saying “Corpse Delivery Service” in German. (unlike in France, there is no German edition of the manga as yet). The *dienst* ending makes it sound somewhat like a government agency (“service” as in “Secret Service”), but thanks to Sasayama, they sort of now are anyway.
- 186.2 FX: BAKO**—ice breaking
- 188.1 FX: FWEEEN**—flying ship sound
- 188.2 FX: EEEEN**—distant flying ship sound
- 189.2** Powell's Bookstore in Portland, which the city is proud of (and it speaks well of a city that it's proud of its bookstore) claims to accept quatloos; they do accept euros, pounds sterling, yen, and pesos, reflecting the truly international clientele of what is probably the largest bookstore in the Western Hemisphere.

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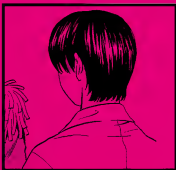
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[エンバーミング]: 死体修復

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